SPORTS / A28

Cecil Mamiit rescues Team Philippines with tennis singles gold

BUSINESS / B1

Jan-Oct OFW inflows up 15.2% to $11.9B

PROPERTY/ B2-1

Christmas, scent of pine trees year round in Tagaytay village on a hill

Pentagon Christmas party no party at all

MINSAN LANG SA ISANG TAON YAN!

WASHINGTON—FOR precisely three weeks a year, the US defense department allows displays of holiday spirit on its premises, provided they conform to rules in the 12-page

PENTAGON/ A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Saturday, December 15, 2007 ★★ 19 sections / Vol. 23 / No. 7 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS
8:00 PM
SUNDAY

RUBEN NEPALES/ HOLLYWOOD CORRESPONDENT

THE BARONG WALKS THE RED CARPET: US director Quentin Tarantino, a recent Manila visitor, wears "barong" to the 65th Annual Golden Globe Nominations at the Beverly Hilton, Beverly Hills, Calif.

'A Jurassic legal step'

Revival of anti-subversion law called 'throwback to martial law'

By Christian V. Esguerra and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

ANGER AND OUTRAGE MET President Macapagal-Arroyo's announcement on Thursday that she was prepared to back the planned revival of the long-dead Anti-Subversion Law to subdue the communist insurgency.

Even administration stalwart Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago was not thrilled at the President's announcement, saying the Anti-Subversion Law had been deemed unconstitutional by the Supreme Court because of its limiting effect on the freedoms of speech and of assembly.

Rafael Mariano, chair of the militant farmers alliance Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), yesterday said the people should unite against "this new attack on civil liberties disguised as an anticommunist campaign."

Mariano said it was "an old trick employed in the 1950s and '60s" that ultimately became "a failure in stopping the mass movement from striving for real democracy, justice and freedom."

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, a victim of human rights abuses during Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship, described the planned revival of the law as "a throwback to martial law" that would "worsen the state of human rights in the country."

Edre Olalia, president of the International Association of People's Lawyers, said it was "a Jurassic legal step backward."

"It is simply Cold War McCarthy-

A JURASSIC/ A17

PNP: 5 civilians shouldn't have been released

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) yesterday expressed frustration over the dismissal of rebellion charges against 14 civilians arrested during the Peninsula Manila hotel siege, saying five of them were actually on a mission to provide security to the leaders of the alleged mutiny.

Senior Supt. Asher Dolina, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-National Capital Region, said the five were listed under code names in a document recovered from the hotel which detailed the plan of the group of Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and Army Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim to walk out of their court hearing and march to the hotel.

Dolina named the five as Roel Gadon, listed under the code name "Gambit," Romeo Solis code-named "Limasol," Francisco Bosi code-named "Bosi," Sonny Madarang under the code name "Madz" and Rommel Lorete code-named "Sniper."

The five were among the 14 civilians whose rebellion cases were thrown out by Makati City Judge Elmo Alameda,

PNP: 5 CIVILIANS/ A8

SAVING SEX SLAVES: Evangelist Eddie Villanueva, head of the Jesus Is Lord (JIL) Movement, and wife Dory (center) welcome and comfort the 8 Filipino women who were promised good jobs in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, but ended up in a sex den. The JIL helped them escape and housed them 8 days prior to their trip home. They arrived Thursday night. *(Story on Page A2)* JESS YUSON

Climate risk report: RP top victim in 2006

By TJ Burgonio

THE PHILIPPINES WAS THE WORLD'S top climate victim in 2006, the year in which it was battered by storms that killed over 1,000 persons and that resulted in losses worth billions of dollars.

It was, in fact, the most affected among the countries that suffered from storms, floods and weather extremes in that year, according to the Global Climate Risk Index of the environment and development organization Germanwatch. (It ranked 51st in 2005.)

The report was presented by Germanwatch and Munich Reinsurance at UN climate negotiations in Bali, Indonesia, on Tuesday.

CLIMATE/ A8

Bali climate summit goes overtime

BALI, INDONESIA—A US-EUROPEAN standoff headed toward a compromise solution late Friday at the UN climate conference, breaking a deadlock over how ambitious the goal should be in negotiating future cutbacks in global-warming gases, UN climate chief Yvo de Boer said.

The talks on stepping up the fight against climate change headed into extra time, after the United States and Europe squabbled earlier over commitments for reining in greenhouse gases.

Asked whether a deal was assured, De Boer replied, "Absolutely. The only question is how long is it going to take to get, how long we will have to stay up to wait for it."

Said Germany's Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel: "The climate in the climate conference is good."

Bali's outcome, and the results of two years of negotiations to follow, may help determine how high the planet's temperatures will rise for decades to come.

BALI CLIMATE/ A12

Mindoro: Key that unlocked RP liberation

By Rodolfo Meim Acebes
Contributor

(The author is a retired NBI employee, a free-lance print and broadcast journalist and founding member of the Occidental Mindoro Historical Society.)

THE WORLD WATCHED WHEN GEN. Douglas MacArthur waded ashore in Leyte, fulfilling his promise of "I shall return."

After the battle of Leyte Gulf, the Americans prepared for their considerably lesser known second landing, this time in Mindoro, 63 years ago today.

When it was still one province, Mindoro played a significant role in the liberation of the country from the Japanese occupation during World War II.

Mindoro's geographical location—it is between Luzon and the islands of Visayas and Mindanao—was of great importance to MacArthur.

When he was preparing for his re-

MINDORO/ A10

Tougher laws needed to beat Reds—Esperon

By Nikko Dizon

ECHOING HIS COMMANDER IN CHIEF, the Armed Forces' chief of staff yesterday expressed support for the revival of the Anti-Subversion Law as a means to help stamp out the decades-old insurgency problem.

Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. told reporters that the Philippines needed a law that would "approximate the internal security act of other countries [that are using it] as a tool in eradicating or defeating insurgency

TOUGHER/ A17

ROGER MARGALLO

SHALL WE DANCE? At the Senate Christmas party for the media, they did. Note an ex-senator, ousted-convicted-pardoned ex-President was a much welcomed gatecrasher.

Dawn Masses unique to RP Christmas fete

By Chito A. Fuentes *in the Visayas* **and Beverly T. Natividad** *in Manila*

TAGBILARAN CITY—WHEN THE dawn Mass signals the start of the Christmas season, there is a song waiting to be sung in Loboc town in Bohol. Unknown to outsiders and even to some residents of Loboc town here, Simbang Gabi, which starts tomorrow at dawn, provides an unusual rite of passage to a local band.

Simbang Gabi is unique to the Filipinos as "we are the only country cele-

DAWN MASSES/ A17

REM ZAMORA

SUSAN ROCES, widow of movie icon Fernando Poe Jr., arrives early at the North Cemetery on Friday to light candles by his grave on the third anniversary of his death.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon will experience scattered light rains while Visayas and Mindanao will have scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have isolated rainshowers.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: SCHATZI QUODALA, PDI RESEARCH/12/14/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

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Second FrontPage

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EZ2
5 7

FOUR DIGIT
2 3 1 1
(In exact order)

Mid-Day **SUERTRES** Evening
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RP 'sex slaves' flee Sabah

8 victims of 'white slavery' finally home

By Tarra Quismundo

EIGHT FILIPINO WOMEN WHO were promised decent and good paying jobs in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah but ended up as sex slaves arrived in Manila Thursday night, eight days after escaping from a prostitution den.

The women, aged 17 to 24, who arrived in Manila via a connecting flight through Cebu City at around 9:30 p.m. Thursday, broke into tears upon seeing the woman who helped arrange their flight home, Dory Villanueva, wife of Evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva.

Their return was considered nothing short of a miracle by leaders of the Jesus Is Lord (JIL) Movement, which provided the women shelter in the Malaysian city for eight days after their escape.

JIL Pastor James, who declined to divulge his surname, said the women were recruited along with dozens of others by a Filipino with ties to a big-time trafficking syndicate in Malaysia. They were promised a salary of P6,500 a day for jobs in karaoke bars and restaurants.

"When they got there, they were sold three times," the pastor told reporters at the airport. "They were locked up and were made to have sex with four to eight men a day. One of them even got pregnant, but she was forced to have an abortion," Pastor James said, fuming as he related what the women had told him.

The women were virtually held prisoners in a Kota Kinabalu condominium where they were housed. They were forced every night to have sex with clients against their will.

On Dec. 5, after a chance meeting with a JIL member in the same building where they stayed, the women mustered the courage to flee. Circumstances of their escape were unclear as they refused to talk to media, but by Pastor James' account, the women fled the building that same night.

The women were brought to the JIL outreach church in Kota Kinabalu, their sanctuary while gangs tried to track them down.

JIL eventually contacted the Philippine embassy through Pedro Chan, the Philippine Consul General in Italy, who told Philippine officials in Malaysia about the women's plight. Sought out by Villanueva, Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn also got in touch with the Kota Kinabalu mayor to help out.

After a few days, Pastor James finished arranging for their travel documents since the women's passports were seized by the syndicate. Hagedorn paid for their flight from Kota Kinabalu to Cebu City. JIL then shouldered their fare to Manila.

WHAT'S INSIDE

GARCIA: I'M not blocking cheap meds bill /A4

MIRIAM TO back RP-Japan pact, after all /A4

ROXAS WANTS VAT on oil suspended /A4

RP-born nurse cleared of raping patient in UK

By Cynthia D. Balana

A MALE NURSE IN BRITAIN OF Filipino parentage has been cleared of raping a 16-year-old patient in a hospital toilet in Oxfordshire, England after a jury accepted that the couple had consensual sex, according to reports from the Oxford Mail and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

Filipino-born Oliver Balicao, 34, and a father of two, was found not guilty by the majority members of an Oxford Crown Court jury after seven hours of deliberations on the case yesterday.

Balicao, who is from Bicester, Oxfordshire, arrived in Oxford in 2001 and acquired British citizenship last year.

During the hearing, Balicao denied having raped the teenager but admitted to one count of sexual activity with her. The teenager was not named because British laws prohibit identifying minors in criminal proceedings.

The reports said the teenager was admitted to the John Radcliffe Hospital after overdosing on paracetamol at home. The girl said she took the pain relievers because she was being bullied at school.

Balicao was accused of luring the girl to a disabled toilet in the early hours of March 12, saying she needed to provide a urine sample because it was determined that she had a low white blood count.

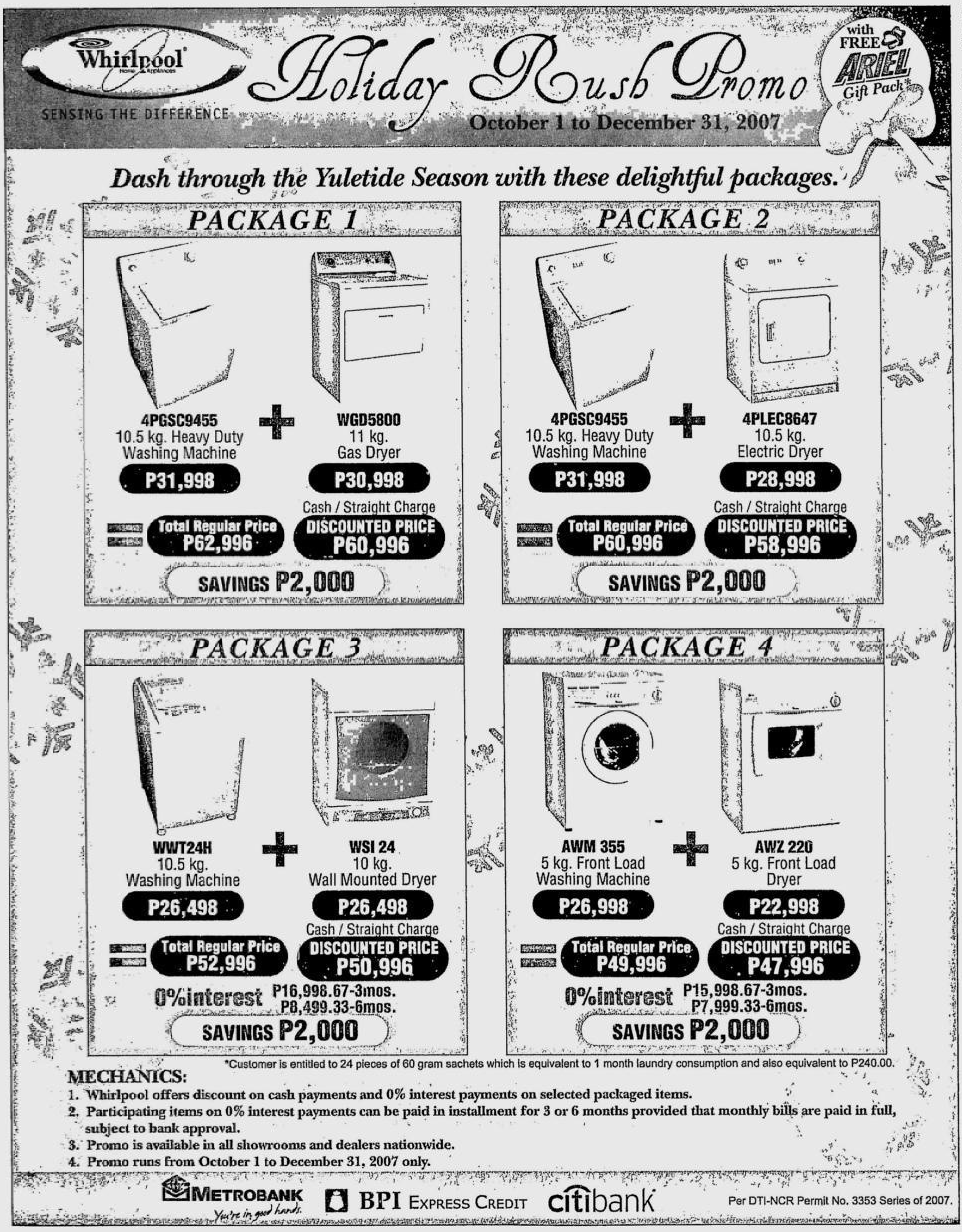
Balicao said he asked the girl just before they had sex whether she was sure she wanted to and that the girl said yes.

"She approached me, put both arms on my shoulders and started kissing me. I made an unwise decision and I am really ashamed of it," he said.

The teenager told the court she wished she had screamed but had been "confused."

She claimed that Balicao groped her breasts and tried to put his hand in her underwear while she was feeling drowsy in her bed.

The John Radcliffe Hospital has described Balicao's actions as "unacceptable" and immediately suspended him from the hospital following its own investigation.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Make it stick, Jamby dared

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO YESTERDAY said Sen. Jamby Madrigal should first prove that businessman Enrique Razon Jr. was indeed a shareholder of the Monte Monte Oro Grid consortium which narrowly won the bidding for the National Transmission Corp. (Transco).

"There is an accusation, but even from a fact-finding point of view there is no probable cause. There has to be more than mere verbal accusation. There has to be evidence to support it," said Santiago in an interview with reporters. "You have to have a witness who has first hand knowledge that there is a subversion of the Anti-Dummy Law because in effect the charge is that there is no Razon name in any of the papers involved and he is acting through somebody else. To make that charge stick you have to present either a witness who can testify through first hand knowledge, or documentary evidence. I doubt very much if that is possible."

Razon is chair of International Container Terminal Services Inc. where the Transco auctioneer, Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management (Psalm) president Jose C. Ibazeta, is currently employed as a board director of the giant port handling services firm and its various subsidiaries.

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SMART
THE POWER TO LEAD

Garcia: I'm not blocking cheap meds bill

By Christian V. Esguerra and Norman Bordadora

HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia?

The 81-year-old lawmaker insists on proposing amendments to the Cheaper Medicines Bill, to the frustration of other House members who say his efforts are blocking passage of the landmark measure.

"I'm not blocking it, I'm trying to improve on it," retorted Garcia.

Garcia warned that the cheaper medicines bill in its present form would even limit the poor's access to medicines because it would "castrate existing provisions of the Intellectual Property Code which empowers the government to undertake parallel importations of medicines if public interest so requires."

"Under the IPC, government agencies are authorized to make a judgment call on when to undertake parallel importations without the need for the President to declare a national emergency," he added in a press statement.

Majority Leader Arthur Defensor yesterday said majority coalition members were losing patience with Garcia as the House has only three remaining session days before the Christmas break to pass HB 2844.

"The bottom line is—we will do everything to pass the bill on second reading on Monday so we can fast-track its passage on third reading the following day," said Defensor.

For more than two weeks now, the House leadership has allowed Garcia to speak his mind and criticize HB 2844.

Garcia said the bill could easily be passed on Dec. 17 if its sponsors would accommodate his two key proposals.

He is opposed to a condition requiring that the President declare a national emergency for the parallel importation of lower-priced drugs.

Garcia argued that the present provisions of the IPC required only the element of "public interest" before the government or an authorized third party can explore the parallel importation route.

Garcia's other objection concerns the adoption of a provision relating to Philippine compliance with the Doha Declaration on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement, which the congressman described as an "affront to national sovereignty."

TRIPS allows less developed countries to work around patent restrictions in the interest of public health.

"What is wrong with raising questions which are valid? It's just a matter of pride on the part of the bill's sponsors that's why they're not accepting my proposals," Garcia said.

He noted that he was a signatory to HB 1, the measure filed by Iloilo Rep. Ferjenel Biron which became the basis for HB 2844.

Defensor blamed Garcia's actions for the delay in the passage of the bill.

"We were stalled only because whenever he's on deck, he questioned the quorum," he said.

Asked if he would again question the quorum to block the passage of the bill, Garcia said: "I won't say that I would use it again, but whoever is presiding should be aware of it [quorum]."

While President Macapagal-Arroyo has certified HB 2844 as urgent, Garcia said the President didn't want such an important measure to be passed with only around 30 lawmakers on the floor.

Quorum is presumed under the House rules until it is questioned.

"They should bring in the numbers. If there are many supporters for this bill, I will bow to the decision of the majority," Garcia said.

Garcia said that while he is being pictured as an obstructionist, "those who are out to railroad the passage of the cheaper medicines law, which would make it more difficult to conduct parallel importations of medicines, are the ones who may be working for the interest of multinational drug firms."

He said his intense questioning of the bill has to do with his desire for Congress to enact an effective cheaper medicines bill.

Garcia said he wanted to correct the bill through amendments that he has been proposing on the floor.

PAROL FESTIVAL
Senate President Manny Villar is flanked by children as they view one of the Christmas lanterns displayed at the ground of St. Joseph Parish Church in Las Piñas City. The occasion is the city's Parol Festival. CESAR TOMAMBO

Miriam to back RP-Japan pact, after all

By Dona Pazzibugan

DISMISSING THE MISGIVINGS OF some of her colleagues, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said yesterday she was ready to sponsor a proposed economic treaty with Japan for the Senate's ratification.

Santiago, chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee, said she and Japan's ambassador to Manila were finalizing a compromise "side agreement" to the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa).

Santiago earlier said that even if the treaty mustered the requisite two-thirds vote from the Senate, some provisions of the Jpepa, including one that sought to grant parity rights to Japanese investors, would most likely be challenged before the Supreme Court for being unconstitutional.

She said the treaty stood a better chance of being ratified and upheld by the Supreme Court if a side agreement that sought to uphold the Philippine Constitution in case of conflict with the treaty's provisions were forged.

Santiago yesterday said she was ready to sponsor the Jpepa to the plenary when Congress resumed sessions on Jan. 20, "provided that I am able to convince the Japanese ambassador that we shall have a side agreement or an exchange of notes that will preclude any finding of unconstitutionality by the Supreme Court."

"What we are trying to do is craft a vocabulary or a formula that would be acceptable to the Japanese government and will preclude the necessity of submitting the Jpepa all over again to the parliament and at the same time will satisfy the constitutional requirements of our own Constitution," she said.

"I think we are nearly there because the Japanese ambassador has been very accommodating and cooperative," she added.

Santiago's co-chair in the Jpepa hearings, Sen. Manuel Roxas II, however said he was not as optimistic of the treaty's chances.

"I remain unconvinced," said Roxas, chairman of the trade and commerce committee, after closing a hearing which he presided over last Thursday.

He said he was not yet convinced that Jpepa would open new and bigger markets for Philippines exports to Japan.

Roxas has been asking Malacanang to show what the country would gain in trade and economic benefits compared to the trade concessions it was to give Japan. He has also been asking what "safety nets" were crafted to cushion the effects of the treaty on affected sectors.

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Roxas wants VAT on oil suspended

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

A SENATOR YESTERDAY URGED THE GOVernment to suspend the collection of the value added tax (VAT) on oil products for six months to alleviate the effect of the high cost of fuel.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II proposed the VAT suspension saying he believed that amending the VAT Law was more feasible than amending the 1998 Oil Deregulation Law.

"In my opinion, instead of waiting or amending or repealing the Oil Deregulation Law which will take long, this is the simplest. Let's just suspend the application of VAT on oil products," he said yesterday.

Under Roxas' proposal, however, the government stands to lose some P15 billion in revenues during the six-month period.

Of the P38.45 per liter price of diesel, P4 goes to VAT. If this is passed, the P4 will automatically no longer be collected, because the pricing is cost plus VAT," Roxas added.

At the same time, he also proposed that the Oil Deregulation Law be amended to compel the Department of Energy to inspect the financial accounts of oil companies to make sure they are not increasing oil prices excessively.

"We all accept that the price of oil is rising in the international market. We only want to make sure that we are not being taken advantaged of," he said.

He said past DOE secretaries have not exercised this authority under the Oil Deregulation Law.

Roxas said the VAT's temporary suspension can not be done by a mere Malacañang order, but requires an amendment of the VAT Law.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, December 15, 2007
2nd Week of Advent

1st Reading:	Sir 48:1-4, 9-11
Gospel:	Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

As they were coming down the mountainside, the disciples then asked Jesus, "Why do the teachers of the Law say that Elijah must come first?" And Jesus answered, "So it is: first comes Elijah to set everything as it has to be. But I tell you, Elijah has already come and they did not recognize him, but treated him as they pleased. And they will also make the Son of Man suffer."

Then the disciples understood that Jesus was referring to John the Baptist.

Commentary

Elijah was the fire, the wrath, the judgment of God on the kingdom of Israel, bringing punishment of famine, drought, and the word of God that shut up even the heavens, denying rain to the earth. Elijah left in a flaming chariot and would come again to turn back the hearts of fathers to their children—to make peace among all. And we believe that John the Baptist is that returning Elijah, seeking to turn us all to peace and forgiveness and change of heart/life once again. Have we taken John's words to heart and reformed our lives? Are our eyes washed out enough to be able to see the Son of Man, who will be crucified and suffer at the hands of 'good religious and law-abiding people'? This is the child who will be born in two weeks time—who are we waiting for?

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: cci@claret.org; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications) & http://www.claretphilippines.org (Claretian Missionaries in the Philippines)

Days of Mar the bachelor are numbered

HIS DAYS AS A BACHELOR MAY BE NUMbered.

Sen. Mar Roxas, the most eligible bachelor politician, yesterday hinted in an informal lunch meeting with reporters that he might get hitched next year most probably with his current flame, veteran broadcaster Korina Sanchez.

"All of us have dreams of getting married. I hope it happens," said Roxas who played coy to reporters probing him with personal questions.

When asked when he intended to get married, Roxas said: "Not today, not this month, and not this year. But there are 365 days next year."

Roxas, however, refused to say who he would walk down the aisle with although he did smile when Sanchez's name was mentioned by reporters.

Roxas and Sanchez have been linked romantically since the 2001 elections when the old rich family scion topped the senatorial race as "Mr. Palengke."

The couple has been the subject of wedding rumors over the past years with their public display of affection on television and public events. (A fan even put up a Mar-Korina blog spot on the web with news, text messages and pictures of their trips and television appearances but this has not been updated since 2004). *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

SLR Camera Club

NOW ON ITS 14TH year, the Samahan ng mga Litratista sa Rizal (SLR Camera Club) will present its award-winning photos highlighting the Philippines' splendor in an exhibit titled "The Best of SLR 2007" on Dec. 16-31 at the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall-Cainta.

Other photos that have earned recognition in prestigious international competitions such as the 2007 Ritz International Photo Contest and Australia's Snowden Mining Photo Contest, as well as award-winning photos in national contests, will also be on view.

For inquiries, contact KC Castillo at 645-1903, e-mail katrinacastillo@innovatronix.com or visit www.flickr.com/groups/slrcameraclub.

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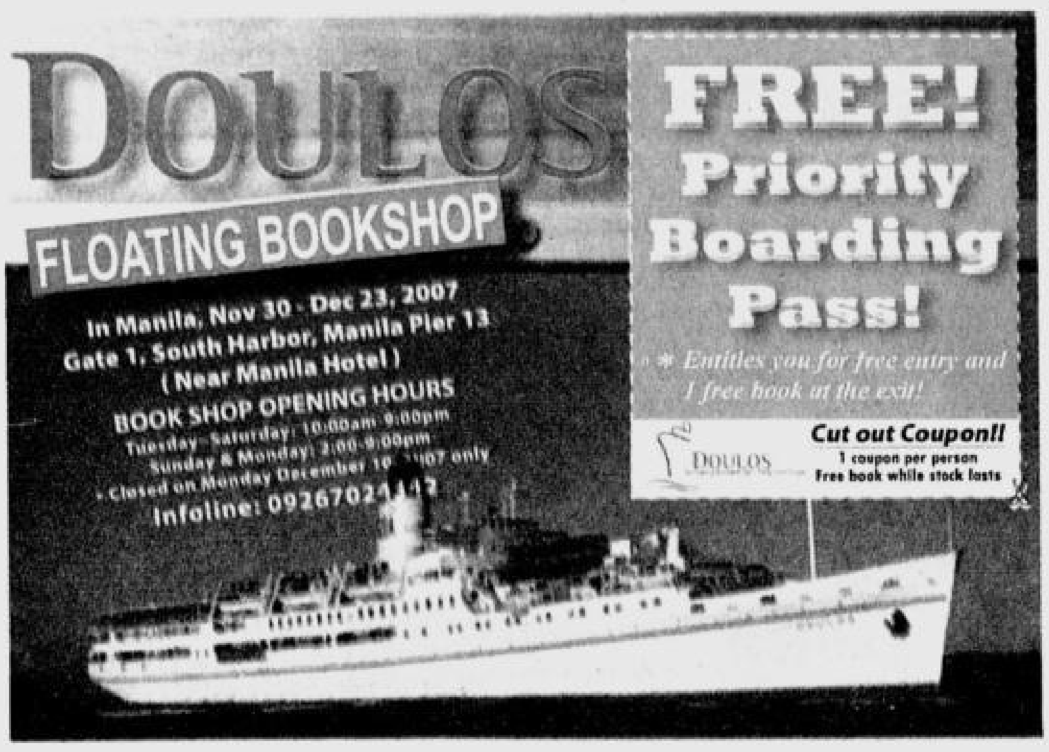

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NEW GRAFT TRIAL

Convicted solon asks SC to restrain Sandigan

By Jocelyn R. Uy

CONVICTED REP. EUFROCINO CODILLA Sr. (Leyte) has asked the Supreme Court to restrain the Sandiganbayan from hearing his graft case while the antigraft has yet to decide on his petition to reverse previous rulings.

Codilla yesterday asked the high court to stop the Sandiganbayan's First Division from proceeding with marathon hearings on his case next month.

The antigraft court has set the trial of the case for Jan. 14 to 16 and the prosecution's presentation of evidence for Jan. 21 to 23. Codilla's lawyers were scheduled to present their evidence on March 10 to 12 and March 24 to 26.

The case involves a graft charge for allegedly issuing a permit to operate a cockpit to his son, Eric, while Codilla was still mayor of Ormoc City in 2000.

Government lawyers claimed that the congressman had a financial interest in granting the business permit to his son.

On appeal

Last September, the antigraft court's Fifth Division found Codilla guilty of two counts of graft and sentenced him up to 18 years in prison for issuing a business permit twice to a family-owned company in 1993. The conviction is on appeal.

On the 2006 case, Codilla earlier filed a petition asking the Supreme Court to set aside a suspension order that the Sandiganbayan issued against him in October 2006 and reverse a 2-month-old ruling denying his request to remand the graft case to the Office of the Ombudsman.

He argued that the facts and circumstances of the case "fall outside the rationale" of the antigraft law.

"The possibility that [Codilla] would influence witnesses or tamper with or prevent the presentation of evidence is no longer imminent," he argued in his motion.

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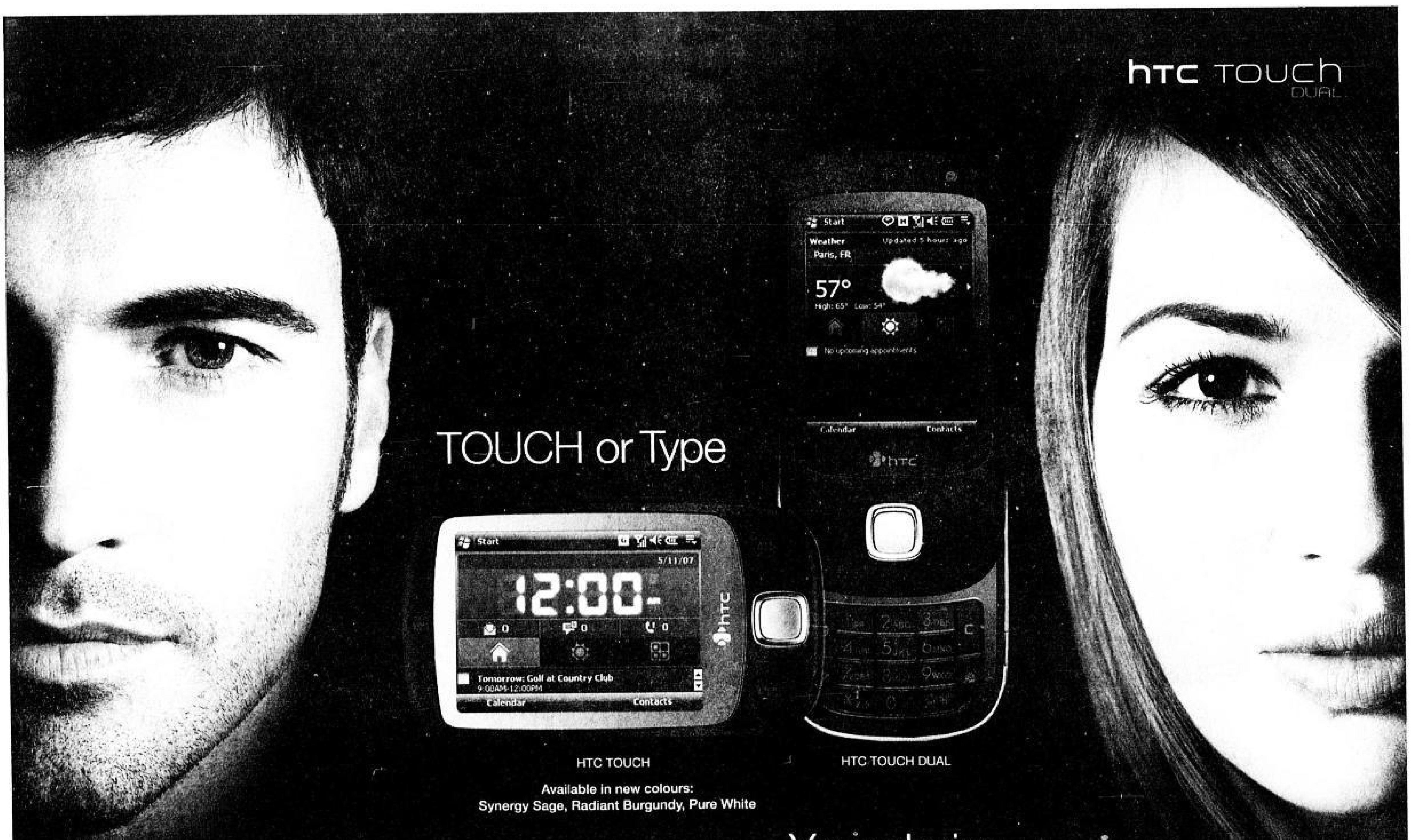

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PNP: 5 civilians shouldn't have been released

From page A1

and were later released from detention.

Provide security

Dolina said the mission of the five were to provide security for Trillanes, Lim and the others as the group left Alameda's courtroom and proceeded to the Peninsula hotel.

The five also carried weapons the whole time, Dolina said.

Despite the junking of their rebellion cases, Dolina said the PNP was not yet through with the five.

"We are looking at other legal remedies that we can take," Dolina told the INQUIRER, without elaborating.

Summons for 5 others

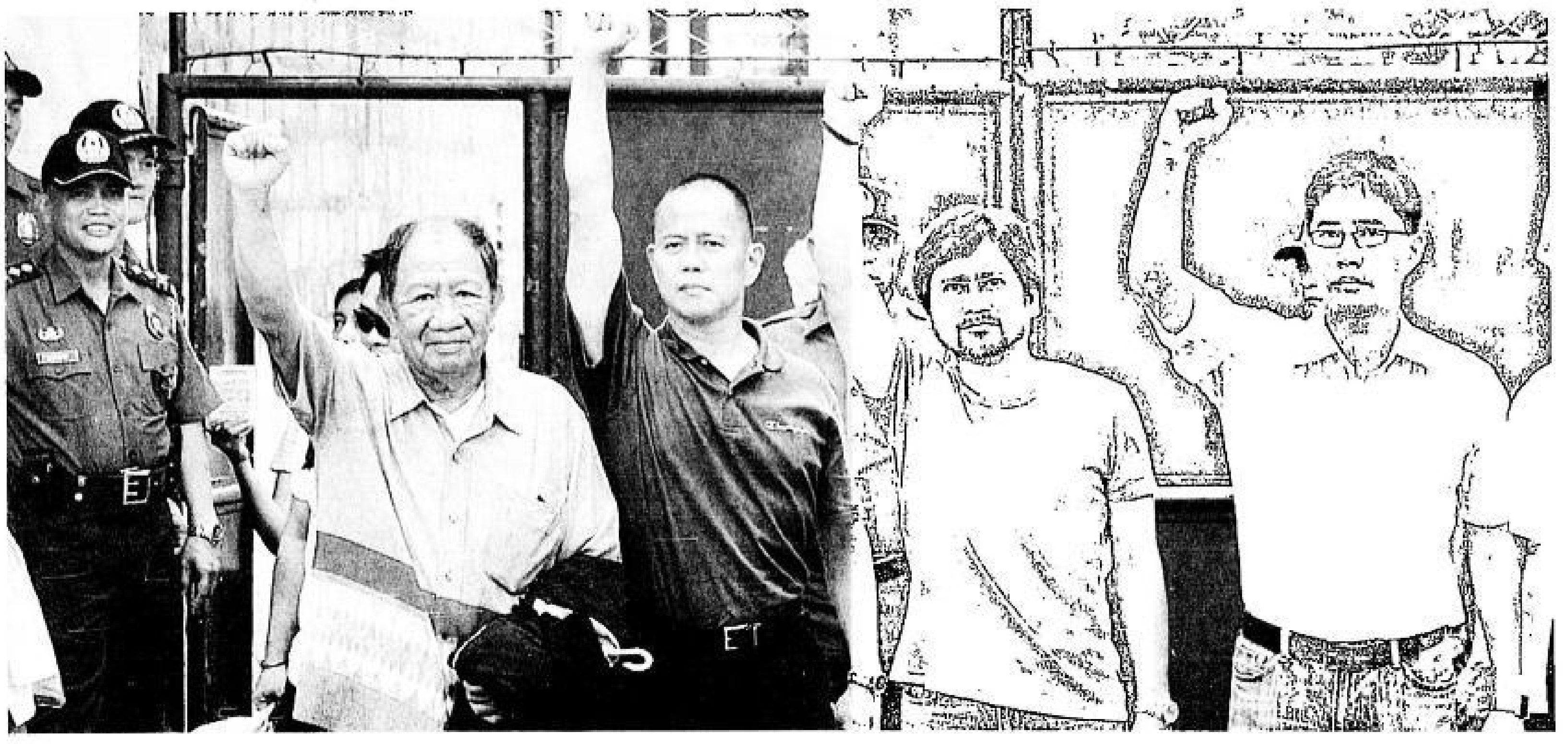
Meanwhile, of the five other civilian personalities summoned by the CIDG to explain their presence at the Peninsula, only civil society leader Jose "Linggoy" Alcuaz appeared in Camp Crame yesterday.

Two other personalities, Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias and Abner Afuang, had sent letters saying they could not heed the CIDG's summons.

Nothing was heard from Linda Montayre of the People's Consultative Assembly and from lawyer Lorna Kapunan.

The five were summoned by the CIDG to shed light on their supposed involvement in the siege. Police said TV footage from broadcast networks showed presence of the five at the hotel during the incident.

Four other civilians cleared by the Makati court said they would file charges against police and justice department officials.



DEFIANT STILL: (Retired) Navy Capt. Julian Advincula, Fr. Robert Reyes, lawyers JV Bautista and Argee Guevara are released from detention on Friday afternoon fists clenched. JOAN BONDOC

No regrets

Fr. Robert Reyes, Julian Advincula and lawyers JV Bautista and Argee Guevarra left the Crame detention facility yesterday, telling reporters they would continue calling for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"As a priest, I never regretted denouncing immorality ... My next move is to continue showing our defiance against a government that is becoming more and more repressive," Reyes said, noting that the latest Pulse Asia survey showed Ms Arroyo is supposedly more corrupt than the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

Bautista said his group was thinking of filing criminal and administrative charges against the PNP for arbitrary detention. They can also file charges of abuse of power and contempt against Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and prosecutors.

Told of the threatened lawsuits, National Capital Region Police Office Director Geary Barias said: "We will just have to face that. It's really sad ... But it's part of the job."

SHE'S OUT, TOO: Myrna Buendia, once allegedly romantically linked to the Communist Party founder Jose Ma. Sison, is released from the PNP Custodial Center in Camp Crame on Friday. The judge ordered all 18 civilians with Trillanes at the Pen released. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

Review antiterror law

Barias also said that because of the dismissal of the charges against the civilians arrested at the Peninsula, there was a need to review the Human Securities Act.

The militant coalition Sanlakas welcomed the release of the civilians, calling them "freedom fighters." Bautista and Guevarra are Sanlakas leaders.

Bautista, Guevarra and Reyes later attended an ecumenical prayer rally at the Rajah Sulayman Plaza in Malate, Manila, organized by some bishops of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and other anti-Arroyo groups.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said the rule of law prevailed with the Makati judge's findings that Trillanes, Lim and several soldiers should go to trial.

"The court has decided. We can only comply," he told reporters.

No recruitment

Esperon reiterated that officers planning to overthrow the Arroyo administration "could try their luck."

"But I will assure you they will not succeed," he said.

He dismissed reports of recruitment of followers by the Magdalo group in the Visayas, saying a check proved that "there was none."

Esperon said the manhunt for escaped Magdalo leader, Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, and two other rebel soldiers continued. *With reports from Jerome Aning and Nikko Dizon*

Climate risk index report: RP top victim, most affected in 2006

From page A1

"In both the Philippines and Indonesia, there were almost 1,300 deaths and damages ranging in the billions due to storms and floods," Sven Harmeling, author of the study, said in a statement on the Germanwatch website.

The report identifies the countries most affected by extreme weather events based on the total number of deaths, deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, losses in US dollars, and losses per unit of the gross domestic product.

The ranking of the most affected countries was dominated by Asian countries. Behind the Philippines in the top 10 of 2006 were North Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, Ethiopia, India, China, Afghanistan, the United States and Romania.

In that year, 12,422 people died from 953 weather events worldwide that wrought damage amounting to $47.6 billion. The five countries with more than 1,000 deaths accounted for more than half of the worldwide deaths, the report said.

It also said that in the Philippines, a series of storms left a death toll of at least 1,267, equivalent to 1.46 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, and losses totaling $4.5 billion.

Drastic year

The Germanwatch report said both Vietnam and the Philippines considered 2006 a drastic year, with losses of between three and five times the average of 1987 to 2006.

"The losses in Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia are also much more severe than the mere expression of 'million-dollar losses' would suggest," it said.

In 2006, strong typhoons battered the country and left a high death toll and staggering damage to crops and property.

Mudslides triggered by heavy rains buried a community in Guinsaugon, Southern Leyte, in February of that year, killing over 100 persons. Nine months later, Supertyphoon "Reming" pummeled the Bicol and Southern Tagalog regions, leaving about 1,000 dead and missing.

In 2006, some 8,568,968 Filipinos were affected by extreme weather events, second to China's 88,325,874 in the Asian region, according to the report.

On the other hand, Peter Hoeppe, head of the Geo-Risk research department of Munich Reinsurance—whose weather extremes database was used in the Germanwatch report—said the events in one year "do not allow the direct conclusion of a causal relation with climate change."

'Climate hotspot'

But he said the increasing incidence of wind storms, floods and other extreme weather events such as heat waves and droughts "shows an increasing danger."

Von Hernandez, campaign director of Greenpeace Southeast Asia, said the Germanwatch report validated the fact that the Philippines was a "climate hotspot."

"This should serve as a warning to our government leaders to finally take their heads out of the sand and face the urgency of putting measures and resources in place to help disaster-prone areas deal with the impacts of climate change," Hernandez said.

He said the government should immediately pass the Renewable Energy bill as part of its contribution to the global effort to help avert more climate change disasters.

Greenpeace has maintained that the passage of a "strong renewable energy law" was crucial to a "low-carbon, sustainable-energy future" because this would allow bigger investment in renewable energy.

Only little steps taken

Government officials have agreed on the need to pass the bill, but have taken little steps to move this forward, Greenpeace said.

But while the Philippines ranked No. 1 in the list of affected countries in 2006, it wasn't among the 10 countries most affected by extreme weather events from 1997 to 2006. These countries were Honduras, Nicaragua, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Dominican Republic, Haiti, India, Venezuela, France and Germany.

"In average over the last 10 years, Honduras, Nicaragua and Bangladesh have experienced the greatest impacts," the Germanwatch report said.

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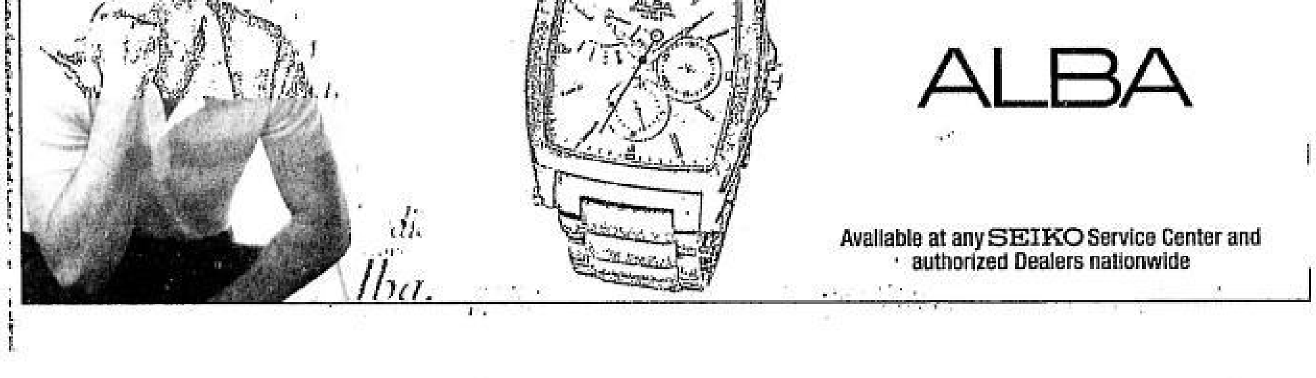

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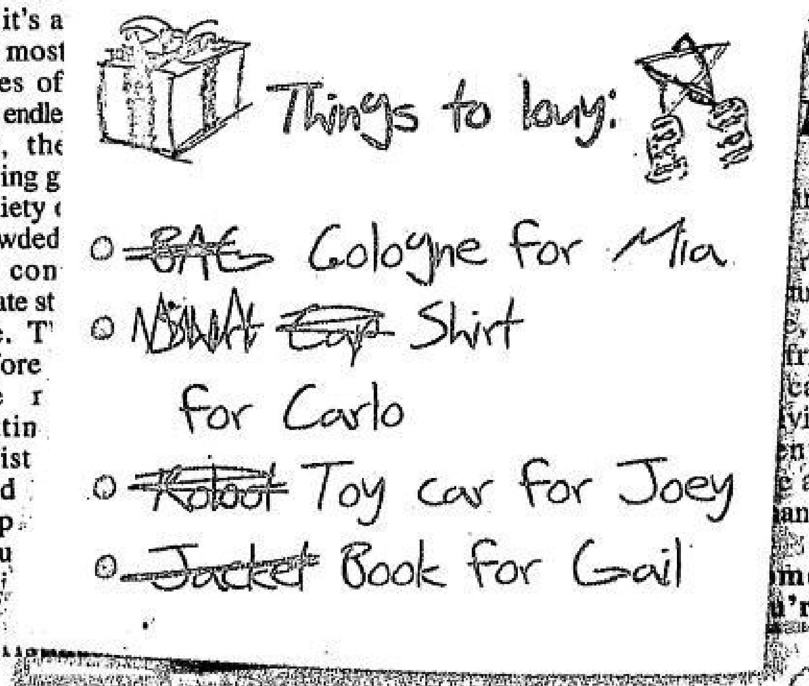

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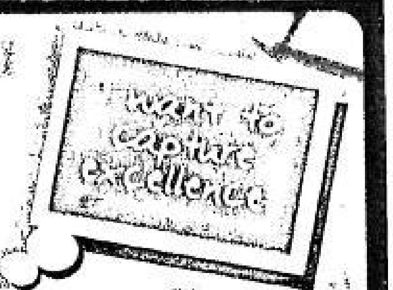

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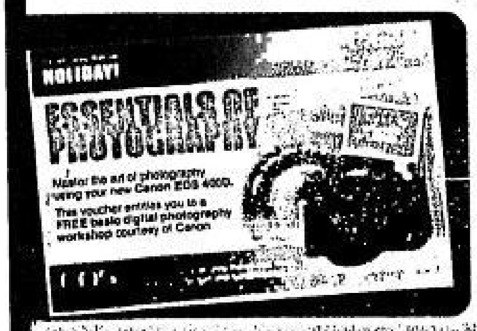

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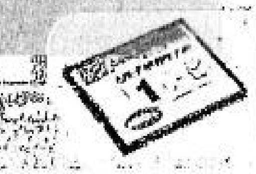

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Mindoro: Key that unlocked RP liberation

From page A1

turn to the Philippines in 1944 after leaving Corregidor for Australia in 1942, his plan was that after his invasion of Leyte, his next landing would be Mindoro.

Defying the Pentagon

But the Pentagon, believing that Mindoro was well defended by the Japanese, overruled MacArthur. To the Pentagon, "landing in Mindoro is too daring in scope and too risky in execution."

But MacArthur knew otherwise. When the time came, he knew he'd defy the Pentagon.

Earlier, when Col. Macario Peralta, the guerrilla leader of the 6th Military District in Panay Island, finally succeeded in establishing contact with him in Australia, MacArthur's first question to him was, "Can you rendezvous a submarine? If so, name five contact places in order of preference."

Submarine missions

Of the five contact places provided by Peralta, two towns in Western Mindoro were chosen by the headquarters of the Philippine Regional Section (PRS) in Australia. The PRS, headed by Col. Courtney Whitney, handled the submarine missions to the Philippines.

The first submarine, the USS Narwhal, commanded by Maj. Lawrence Phillips, surfaced in Paluan Bay, northwest of Mindoro, on Oct. 23, 1943. The men with Phillips were Lt. Commander Charles "Chick" Parsons, Capt. Ricardo Galang, 1st Lt. R.F. Songco, Warrant Officer Braynard Wise, and five Filipino volunteers of the US Army namely Sergeants Benjamin Harder, Arcangel Baniares, Vicente Pinuela, Alfredo Alberto and Ramon Vitorio.

Phillips' mission was to establish a coast watcher in Mt. Calavite in Paluan Bay to monitor the Japanese ship movements entering and leaving the Manila Bay. He also had one important mission: To settle differences between two Mindoro guerrilla leaders due to a power struggle.

Parsons, on the other hand, had a separate mission: To organize an intelligence network called Spy Squadron or SPYRON.

Warring guerrillas

Although there were several guerrilla units in Mindoro, two major groups were at war with each other. One was led by Maj. Ramon Ruffy, a Batangueño from Bauan and the provincial commander of the Philippine Constabulary assigned in Mindoro before the outbreak of the war. The other was led by Capt. Esteban Beloncio of Calapan, who was a public school principal called to active duty by the Mindoro Cadre when the war broke out.

Phillips met the two guerrilla leaders in Mamburao in December 1943. After three days of negotiations, he succeeded in uniting the two leaders. Thus, a provisional command was organized with Ruffy as the overall commander and Beloncio as the executive officer. The new command was based in Naujan.

Phillips' radio network began reporting to headquarters which, in turn, transmitted messages of the position of Japanese ships passing the Mindoro Straits. This led to some sinking of enemy ships. Unfortunately, an informant tipped the Japanese of Phillips' location. He was later killed in a gun battle.

Despite Phillips' death and because Mindoro was an important intelligence base for MacArthur, a second submarine mission commanded by Cmdr. George Rowe was sent to Barrio Calintaan, a municipality of Sablayan, on July 10, 1944. The mission of USS Nautilus, called ISRM or "I Shall Return MacArthur" had the same mission as that of USS Narwhal: To monitor the Japanese movements at sea and in the air.

Don't meddle

But Rowe had strict instructions, this time, not to meddle with the problems of the guerrillas. He was accompanied by 21 Filipino commandos led by 1st Lt. A. Hernandez. They brought an air warning device, a high-powered camera, and a photostat machine for copying captured Japanese documents. They also brought drums of gasoline, brand-new garands, carbines, .45 pistols, grenades, blankets, combat boots, medicines, K-rations containing chocolates, chewing gums, cigarettes and food provisions for distribution to the guerrillas.

Rowe settled in Mt. Matabang, Sitio Labanan, in the town on Abra de Ilog. From this observation hideout, he monitored the 7 1/2-mile Isla Verde Passage that separates Batangas and Mindoro. The body of water was important because it is near the mouth of Manila Bay and a step away from Lipa which had an airfield controlled by the Japanese.

Parsons' contacts in Manila were prominent citizens like Sen. Jose Ozamis, sugar planter Virgilio Lobregat, Spaniard Juan Miguel Elizalde, Italian Enrico Pirovano and Swiss Hans Menzi. But when the Japanese Kempetai (military police) discovered that Parsons was operating a spy network in Mindoro, they offered a prize for his capture.

Prominent Filipino spies

One of those who joined the group of Rowe was Claro M. Recto, the minister of foreign affairs when Jose P. Laurel became the president of the so-called puppet republic. Recto, whose nom-de-guerre was Justice, chose Rowe's unit because his two sons-in-law, Francisco Mata Gomez and Johnny Ysmael were with Rowe's group. Other prominent Manileños who were in the dangerous spy mission for Rowe were Col. Dominador Barilea, Jesus "Tuting" Roces, Rafael "Liling" Roces Jr., Jose "Peping" Roces, brave sons of Don Rafael Roces Sr., the owner of the publishing house and the Ideal Theater on Avenida Rizal.

Unfortunately, a SPYRON courier was caught by the Kempetai. Found in his possession was a letter of Parsons' wife Katsy to her mother, Blanch Walker, a missionary pastor of the Cosmopolitan Church in Manila. Tortured in the dungeons of Fort Santiago, the courier revealed names. Ozamis was also captured and executed. Found in his person were some papers, one of them was a letter to Col. Manuel A. Roxas from Parsons.

In February 1944, Blanch was arrested with Helen Wilkes, Mary Stagg and Samboyd, Mary's son. Mary's other son, Samuel, a columnist of the Philippines Free Press using the name, Jungle Philosopher, had earlier hid in Mt. Casague in Sta Cruz, Mindoro, with Isabelo Abeleda and his family.

Domino pieces

Like domino pieces, Lobregat, Pirovano, Elizalde and Rafael Roces Jr., suspected by the Japanese of feeding valuable information to either Parsons or Rowe in Mindoro, were arrested.

The Kempetai imprisoned and tortured them in Fort Santiago. On Aug. 28, 1944, the prisoners, with 23 other members of the resistance, were taken in a truck to Manila's Cementerio del Norte. There, they were beheaded and buried in one common ground.

On Oct. 20, 1944, the American liberation forces finally landed in Leyte.

MacArthur, on board his favorite cruiser Nashville, set foot in Palo, Leyte, next town to Tacloban. He, thus, fulfilled his promise of "I shall.return."

After the battle of Leyte Gulf, the Americans prepared for their second landing, this time, in Mindoro with deliverance day set on Dec. 15, 1944. The mission to Mindoro had three forces: 1) the Mindoro Attack Group under Adm. Arthur Struble with Nashville, eight destroyers, 31 LCI, 17 minesweepers, 14 small craft and 12 escort destroyers; 2) the Close Covering Group under Rear Admiral Berkey with two light cruisers, one heavy cruiser, and seven destroyers; 3) the Motor Torpedo Boat Group with 27 PT boats under Lt. Cmdr. Burt Davis.

MacArthur was right

MacArthur knew Mindoro well. To him, getting Mindoro meant dividing the Japanese forces in Luzon from those in Visayas and Mindanao, thus weakening the strength of the enemy. Mindoro was only 200 miles south of Leyte and 300 miles north of Luzon. It had a solid ground where he wished to construct airfields for his assault in Luzon via Lingayen.

To MacArthur, with Mindoro in his hands, only the island bastions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa stood between America and Japan.

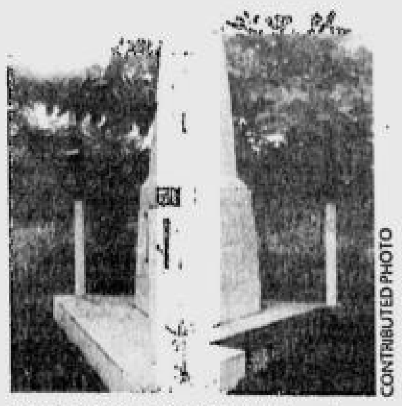
Dec. 13, 1944 was an unlucky day for the Mindoro Attack Group. Its convoy was spotted from the air by a Kamikaze fighter plane carrying two powerful bombs. The suicide pilot dived toward Nashville and exploded. Some 120 American officers and men died, including Col. John T. Murtha, commander of the 310th Bombardment Wing.

Brig. Gen. William Dunckel, leader of the ground forces and many others were injured. They were immediately transferred to Dashiell, a destroyer.

At dawn of Dec. 15, 1944, Struble, the leader of the naval force, ordered the bombardment of San Jose-Pandurucan to clear it for the landing of the liberation forces. MacArthur was right; there were not many Japanese soldiers in Mindoro to meet his force. They retreated to the mountains while the others were left to guard their radio equipment.

At 7:10 a.m., the 24th Infantry Division with 11,780 combat men, 9,516 Army Air Force and 5,901 service troops landed at the Red Beach in Caminawit Point, White Beach in Barrio Bubog, Blue Beach in Barrio San Agustin and Green Beach across the Bugsanga River. It was followed by the landing of VII Amphibious Forces carrying 16,500 soldiers with 27,600 tons of supplies.

At 10:45 a.m., the wounded Dunckel assumed command of all forces that landed in San Jose. His instruction from MacArthur was the immediate construction of airfields.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

STATUE OF LIBERTY at the plaza of San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, is a proud reminder of the US landings in the capital town to make possible the landings in Central and southern Luzon.

Final victory

Machines like bulldozers, graders, cranes, trucks and jeeps came out of the ships. The airfield built in San Jose where B-17 Flying Fortresses and B-24 Liberator planes landed was named McGuirre Airdome in honor of Col. Thomas McGuire who crashed in Negros. The airfield in Barrio Upper Mangyan where B-25 Mitchell bombers landed was named Murtha Airfield in honor of Colonel Murtha who died in the Nashville. In three more airstrips, P-51 Mustang planes taxied for landing and takeoff.

Promising city

With the arrival of the American liberation forces in Mindoro, UP professor, lawyer and Romblon Assemblyman Gabriel Fabella, who himself came to San Jose to look for work, wrote: "Overnight, San Jose became a city, promising and very prosperous. Upon hearing this, almost everybody wanted to go to San Jose."

With Mindoro now as base for the American naval and aerial armaments, the liberation forces sailed the seas and flew the skies to Luzon via Lingayen and on to final victory.

To use the words of Mrs. Douglas MacArthur who sent a letter to this writer on Dec. 15, 1994, during the 50th anniversary of the Mindoro landing, "Mindoro became the key that unlocked the liberation of the Philippines."

Rats attack family, bite child

Two-month-old Roberto Estrella was in critical condition at the Pasay City General Hospital after being bitten on his knees and forearms by several rats last November. One bite was so bad that Baby Obet's middle finger was almost torn off his hand by what was described as cat-sized rats.

The rat problem in the Estrella compound was so bad that the next day, Obet's 14-year-old female cousin also became a victim of rat bites but received only minor injuries. It was later found out that the older members of the family were also frequent prey of rat bites.

Despite this, the Estrella family is still lucky that the rest only got skin wounds from their rodent encounters. That's because the diseases that these rats can bring are often more dangerous than the inflicted wounds. These include Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (particularly deadly for humans), Rat-Bite Fever, Leptospirosis, Eosinophilic Meningitis, Salmonella Enterica Serovar Typhimurium, and Murine Typhus. This is why we need to protect our communities vigilantly from these dangerous rodents. We surely do not want one of our kids to be their next victim.

Would you risk the plague?

Rats are very smart, that's why they're tough to eliminate. They develop what is called bait shyness when they realize that they are in danger. This bait shyness makes them wary, and thus are able to avoid most traps and instant-kill rat poison.

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While the rodent problem continues to be an alarming problem in many local communities, each of us needs to be vigilant and responsible for the cleanliness of our own households. The rat problem cannot be solved overnight, which is why it has to be a committed and continuous community effort.

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SPECIAL REPORT

Pentagon Christmas party no party at all

From page A1

"Pentagon Guide for Use of Hallways."

That means no candles, no shouting, no live Christmas trees, no loud music, no hanging things in the windows.

"No lights in the hallways, no lights on the doors," Pentagon building manager Michael J. Bryant said. "It's safety-oriented—all the humbug stuff."

It's also mostly common sense. But the defense headquarters in suburban Washington is one of the world's largest office buildings, with more than 27 kilometers of corridor and thousands and thousands of doors begging to be festooned with something.

Some 20,000 uniformed and civilian personnel work there, helping wage two foreign wars and manage the nation's armed forces.

Aside from that—and the fact that some of them wear combat boots to the office—they are pretty much like other office workers.

Some are like that neighbor who goes overboard every year with too many twinkling lawn figurines.

Snowman blocks corridor

Somebody once stood a 1.2-meter Frosty the Snowman outside his office, violating the rule against blocking corridors.

Two soldiers asked for permission to dress in Santa suits and rappel from the Pentagon roof two years ago.

"It was Christmas and they thought it would be a nice thing to do," said Bryant, who wished he could approve it.

"The problem with letting folks do that is then you've got Easter and the Easter Bunny wants to rappel, and you have Hanukkah and the Hanukkah guy wants to rappel, and once you start something, there's no turning it off here," he said.

OK, so there's no "Hanukkah guy." Still, he has a point.

Bryant's office maintains safety and order in the halls and public areas; individual office heads are responsible for what goes on in their assigned spaces.

It's impossible to know how many thousands of people are trimming Christmas trees, stringing lights and eating potluck lunches behind closed doors.

28 groups get nod

But 28 groups got permission this December to hold holiday parties in the halls, after submitting form No. DD2798—"Application/Permit for Use of Space on the Pentagon Reservation."

It is due two weeks before a party; must be approved by Bryant, as well as Pentagon fire, police and environmental officials, and must be accompanied by a scaled drawing showing where the event will be, how the food tables will be situated and where the nearest exits are.

"If the application/permit is disapproved, the reason will be stated on the permit and an opportunity will be given to correct the issue," the rules say.

Just another memory

Sometimes no corrections are needed. This year the Navy has four, 2.4-meter, fully decorated artificial trees in its corridor, skirting at least two rules.

Someone gave them "a waiver," was all Bryant would say, though he did not appear to approve.

Anyway, it will soon all be just another memory. Decorations may go up no earlier than the second Friday of December and must come down by the first Friday of January.

Until then, as Bryant says, it falls to his staff "to be the grinches." *AP*

ABS-CBN to sue research firm

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

TELEVISION GIANT ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. has sued media research agency AGB Nielsen Media Research Philippines over its alleged "systematic, organized and well-funded attempt" to rig television ratings.

ABS-CBN filed a P63 million civil case before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court yesterday against AGB-Nielsen for damages and injunction with an application for a temporary restraining order, the network's chief legal counsel Maximilian Uy told a press briefing yesterday.

Video clip

"We regret to bring this matter to the public but the Filipino people and the entire media industry deserve to know the truth," ABS-CBN chair Eugenio Lopez III said in a video clip shown during the briefing.

Charina Dy, the AGB Nielsen's human resources and administration manager, said it was premature to issue a statement at this point. "We have not seen the complaint yet," Dy said.

At the press briefing, ABS-CBN executives related how the network came to discover the alleged attempt to cheat in the ratings.

According to Vivian Tin, chief officer for research and business analysis, a few weeks ago, the ABS-CBN station manager in Bacolod was sought out by a man who volunteered to offer information about attempts to bribe households where AGB Nielsen's meters were installed to get them to switch the programs they were watching.

Meters are installed in selected households across the country as a means of measuring the ratings. The identity of these metered households is kept secure so that no outside entity can influence their viewing behavior.

During the press briefing, a video of an interview conducted in Ilonggo (with English subtitles) was played, with the unidentified informant shown in silhouette.

The informant confessed that he moved around the barangays with six other people, looking for the AGB meter device used to measure the ratings.

Upon identifying the household with installed meters, he makes an offer to provide P500 a month in cash or groceries in exchange for the household's changing channels.

"If they accept our offer, which almost always happens because of poverty...we convince them to shift the channel to the other station," the informant said.

Tampered

Asked which network he took his orders from, the informant declined to name the network involved. But ABS-CBN executives said the informant had identified the network to them.

"Our issue is with AGB because we have a contract with them," Tin said when asked if the tampered meters favored rival GMA Network Inc.

As a result of this discovery, Tin said ABS-CBN has demanded that AGB Nielsen shut down its service and investigate the extent of the breach.

AGB-Nielsen, however, refused, saying it would need to investigate further.

In a statement, rival GMA Network expressed concern about the report that TV ratings could be manipulated.

"The accuracy of the ratings of the TV programs is of utmost importance not only to the TV stations but also to the advertisers, ad agencies, and the viewing public," it said.

It said the network has been complaining to AGB Nielsen for more than four years now about "the highly illogical and unexplainable disparity between the cable and non-cable ratings of GMA's programs, which do not obtain in respect to ABS-CBN's programs".

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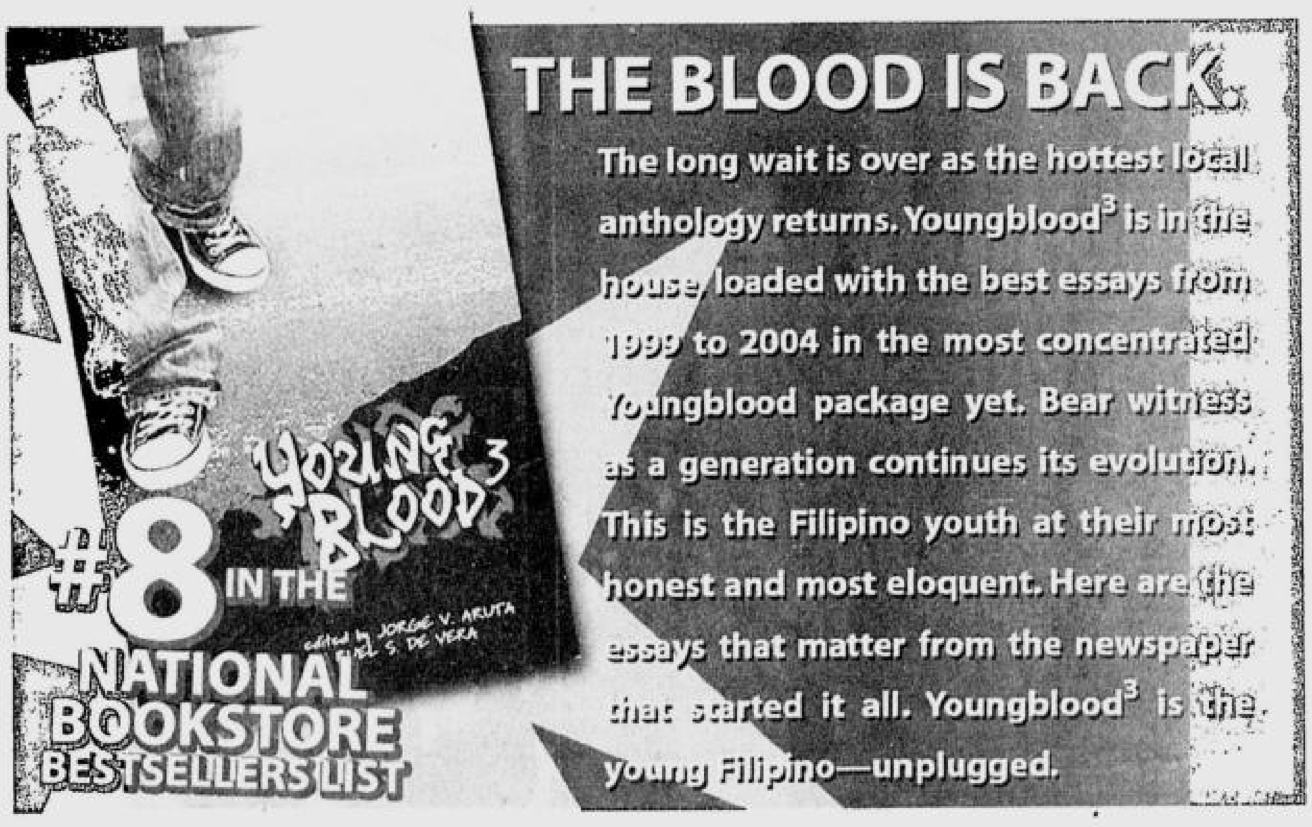
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Bali climate summit goes overtime

From page A1

Delegates for days had sparred over the wording of the conference's main decision document, whose most contentious passage was the European Union's suggestion of a goal of reducing emissions by between 25 and 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020.

De Boer had urged the 12-day conference to wrap up work by noon, but said he was still hopeful even after the talks passed their official deadline of 1000 GMT (6 p.m., Manila time).

"It's very difficult to say at this moment how long exactly it's going to take," he told Agence France-Presse.

But the mood was brighter and the horse-trading more serious compared to Thursday, when the negotiations were gridlocked by accusations and sourness.

"I am always optimistic. I think we will have an agreement," said Harlan Watson, US President George W. Bush's senior climate negotiator.

"I think that the situation is good ... that we will have success in the end," Gabriel said in a shift to conciliation with Washington after a confrontation on Thursday.

"All parties are willing to be flexible, to search for a compromise," he said of Europe's past insistence that Bali should set tough 2020 guidelines for greenhouse gas cuts, despite opposition from Washington on setting goals.

Heatwaves, melting glaciers

The talks on the Indonesian resort island, which began on Dec. 3, are aimed at reaching agreement to launch two years of negotiations to work out a new international climate treaty to succeed the UN's Kyoto Protocol beyond 2012.

Kyoto binds all industrial nations except the United States to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 5 percent below 1990 levels by 2008-12, a first step toward combating the trend to ever more heatwaves, desertification, melting glaciers and rising seas.

The United Nations wants a new deal to involve all nations, led by the United States, the top emitter of greenhouse gases mainly from burning fossil fuels, and including poor nations, such as China and India, where emissions are soaring.

WWF
Real leaders tackle climate change
CO2

HAMMERING OUT THE MESSAGE: Dutch Environment Minister Jacqueline Cramer gets literal at the UN Climate Change Conference in Nusa Dua, Bali, which is scheduled to end Dec. 14.

REUTERS

Delegates from nearly 190 countries were taking part in the marathon talks.

Grimmest scenario

Nobel-winning UN scientists this year painted their grimmest tableau yet about the "greenhouse effect" in which dangerous, invisible gases spewed from fossil fuels act like an atmospheric blanket, stoking up heat from the Sun.

This is causing Earth's delicate climate system to change, and the impact could be catastrophic for millions of people just decades from now, they say.

The United States and China together account for about half of all emissions, but lie outside the Kyoto curbs.

Past bedtime

"I think it's moving along very, very slowly but it's moving along well," said De Boer. He told Reuters the talks were likely to drag on long into the night "way past your bedtime."

Tempers flared on Thursday after the EU and the United States accused each other of blocking the launch of talks.

European Commissioner Stavros Dimas threatened to boycott US climate talks in Hawaii next month if Bali failed.

Indonesian formula

Early on Friday, Indonesia suggested dropping an EU-backed ambition for rich nations to cut emissions by between 25 and 40 percent by 2020 in a bid to overcome Washington's opposition.

Washington says any figures would prejudge the negotiations.

De Boer said the new draft was the basis for a compromise because it retained a guideline, consistent with the EU's 2020 target, that emissions should peak within 10 to 15 years and be cut by to well below half of 2000 levels by 2050.

Stumbling block

US President George W.

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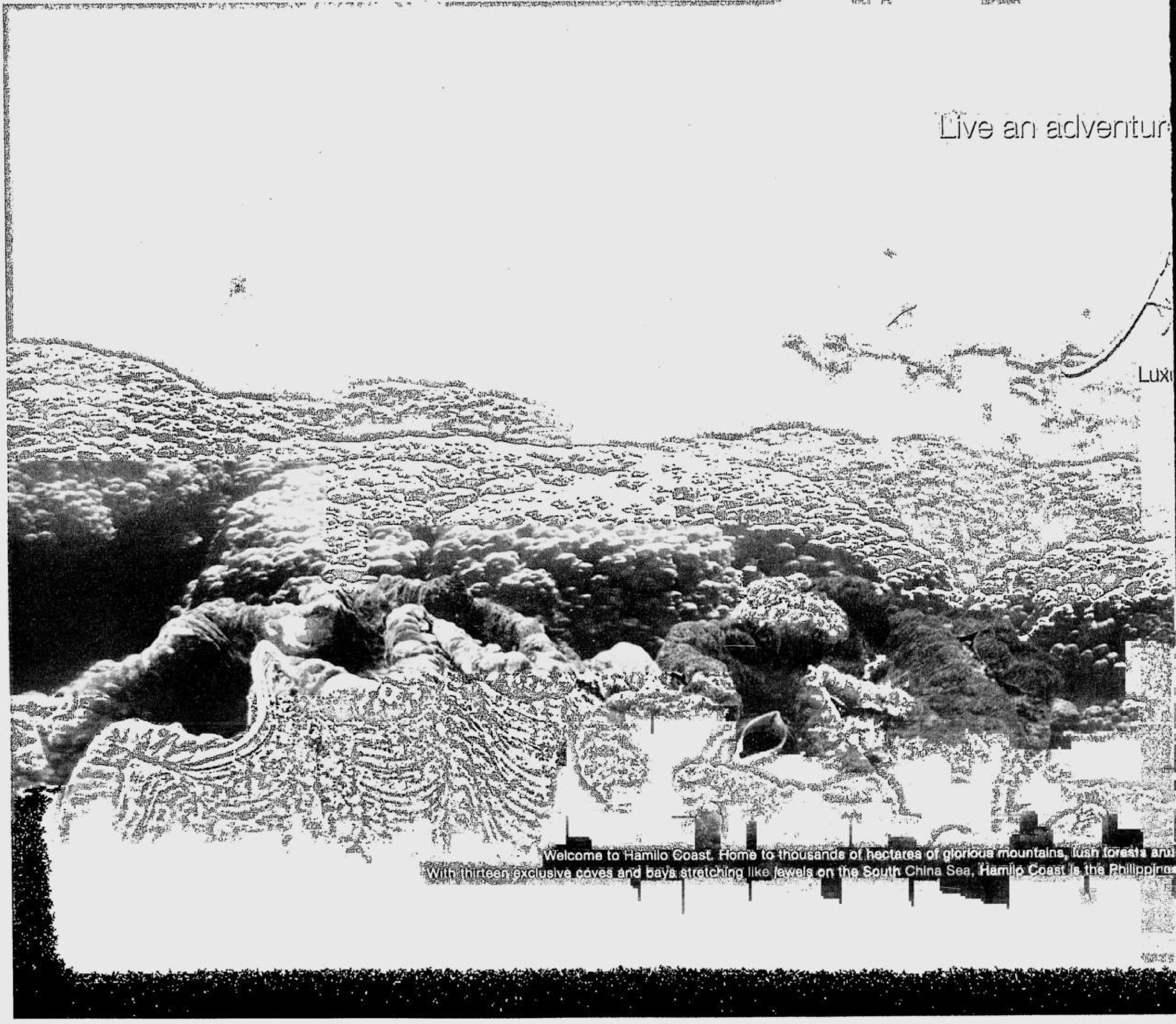
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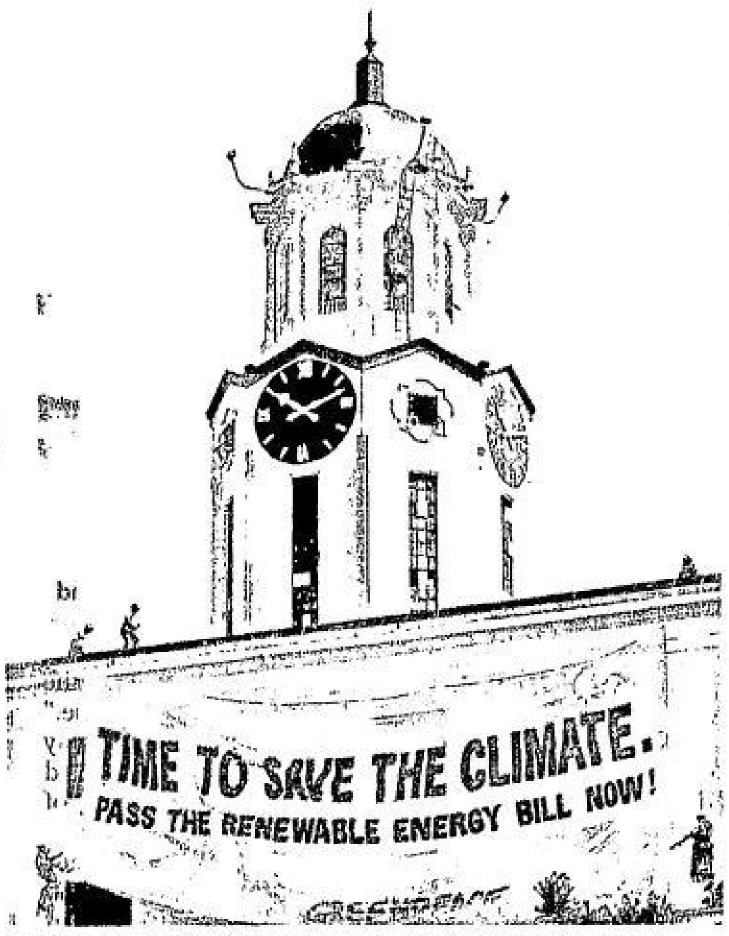
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GREENPEACE

CLOCK IS TICKING: Greenpeace activists unfurl a banner as they rappel down the wall of Manila city hall on Friday. The activists timed the event as the UN Climate Conference draws to a close in Bali, Indonesia. AP

Bush rejected Kyoto in 2001, although it remains part of the overall UN process, while China, as a developing nation, does not have binding emissions targets.

The biggest stumbling block in Bali has been over whether the text should include figures indicating how far industrialized countries are willing to cut emissions to meet scientists' appeals for drastic, early reductions.

Outside the conference, activists dressed as polar bears paraded in the sweltering heat and carried signs saying, "Save humans too." They urged delegates to remember that the world's poor were already feeling the impact of climate change.

Curbing deforestation

Bush rejected Kyoto in 2001, saying caps on emissions would threaten US jobs and unfairly excluded targets for major developing economies.

But the United States has agreed to join talks on a new treaty, meant to be agreed in Copenhagen in late 2009 after Bush leaves office, with the participation of developing nations.

On other issues, the Bali talks agreed steps on Friday to slow deforestation. Trees store carbon dioxide as they grow. *AP, Reuters and AFP*

Global warming dissenters 'demonized'

COPENHAGEN, DENmark—The head of the UN panel on climate change compared him to Hitler. Another leading scientist called him a parasite. A third described his latest book as a "stealth attack" on mankind.

The list of allegations against Bjoern Lomborg, one of the world's leading climate change skeptics, almost reads like an indictment for war crimes.

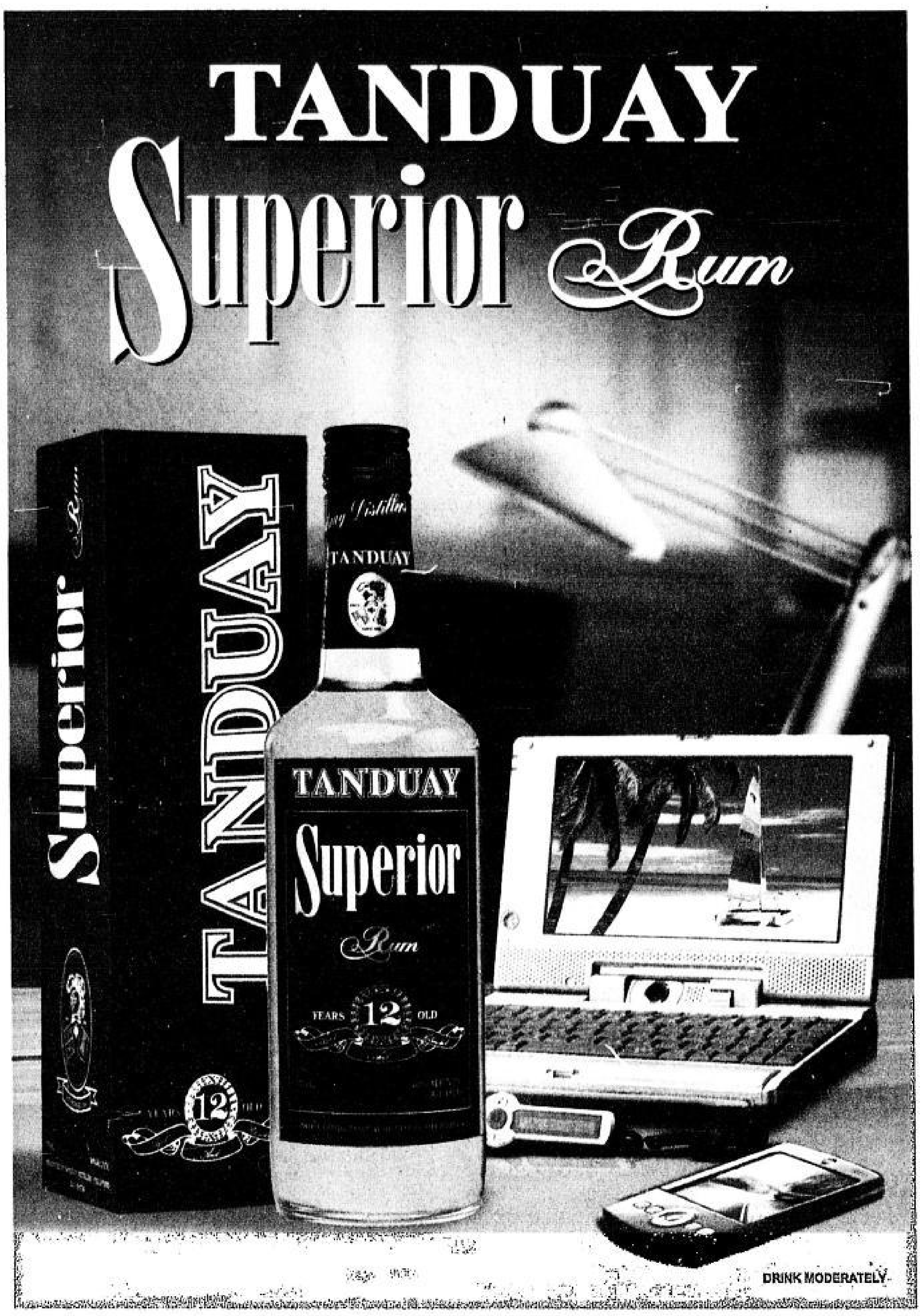
As Al Gore shows off his Nobel Peace Prize and world policymakers hammer out a new strategy for saving the planet, climate change contrarians say they have been elbowed out of the debate.

They say mainstream scientists have stifled healthy intellectual discourse by demonizing dissenters as oil industry lobbyists or lunatics.

"I really think it reflects entirely on them," said Lomborg, a mild-mannered Danish statistician who says global warming isn't a big threat and that international treaties requiring sharp and immediate cuts in carbon emissions would cost a lot but do little good.

Angry words and table-pounding, he said, only show "that your argument is not that strong."

Climate change experts counter that the contrarians are no longer relevant because the evidence now is overwhelming that man-made warming will have dangerous consequences if left unchecked. *AP*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Shortchanged

EDITORIAL

NOBODY WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT THE National Transmission Corp. (Transco) was for him to give away, until Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye spoke out Thursday. "Can they match the price?" he demanded to know. "Tell Jamby, even to her we will award it if she can match the price."

Bunye was reacting to charges made by opposition senators, including Sen. Jamby Madrigal, that the bidding for the 25-year concession to operate the nationwide electric transmission grid had been rigged to favor some people close to Malacañang. The auction held Wednesday was won by the Monte Oro consortium on a bid of $3.95 billion, narrowly beating the $3.905-billion offer of the only other bidder, San Miguel Energy Corp. Madrigal, whose family has wide business interests, apparently had no interest in taking over Transco. But if Bunye were not so focused on showing her up, he should have hurled his challenge at all comers and he might have been surprised to see the government getting much more for what has been described as one of the crown jewels of the asset privatization program.

But then getting the highest price for this jewel didn't seem to be the overriding consideration in this auction. In fact, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM), which conducted the bidding, seemed to have made sure the highest bidder would not be around. The La Costa group, which claimed to be 95-percent Filipino-owned, said it would have offered $6 billion for Transco—$2 billion more than the winning bid—but it was disqualified from bidding. PSALM said the reason was that La Costa could not prove that it could raise the minimum equity investment of $300 million on its own. But La Costa produced a certification from Security Bank attesting to its capability to raise that kind of money.

Then there was Two Rivers Pacific Holdings Corp. It was pre-qualified to bid, and one company official said it was prepared to offer $4.2 billion. But on the eve of the bidding, it suddenly withdrew, as did the fourth qualified bidder, Citadel Holdings Inc. Two Rivers said it was forced to withdraw from the auction after its Italian partner, Terna-Rete Electtrica Nazionale, pulled out from the consortium. Terna-Rete said the decision to withdraw was made after a review of the "regulatory scenario" and the "economic scenario." Citadel was said to have dropped its bid after its financial partner backed out.

So here we have two business consortia formed precisely to bid for Transco, already pre-qualified and ready with their bids, pulling out suddenly at the last minute. What happened here? Were some arms twisted somewhere? Or did they see any ghosts—maybe their own, had they persisted in their quest to run Transco? Did they see the futility of bidding?

If these groups saw, rather belatedly, that the cards were stacked against them, it's a view shared by opposition senators. The reason is that people with very strong connections to Malacañang are believed to have worked behind the scene to ensure that Monte Oro would win. People like Enrique Razon, treasurer of the administration Team Unity in the May 2007 elections and chair of International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI), who is said to have substantial holdings in a company that is part of the winning consortium. And President Macapagal-Arroyo's brother, Diosdado Macapagal Jr., who is also part of the group, according to Madrigal.

And they had their own man heading PSALM in Jose Ibazeta, a member of the board of Razon's ICTSI. It was a situation that had conflict of interest written all over it, but neither Ibazeta nor anyone in the administration saw it that way. But then this is an administration that takes its cue from a justice secretary who doesn't see anything illegal in the President's brother profiting from a transaction with the government.

But all is not lost yet. Opposition senators can probe into this smelly transaction when Monte Oro applies for a congressional franchise to operate Transco. Then, maybe, the public will know how Monte Oro won a sweetheart deal and why its real competitors suddenly developed cold feet. Indeed, if Congress would put its mind to it, the government could still get the right price for Transco. Without a franchise, the deal won't push through.

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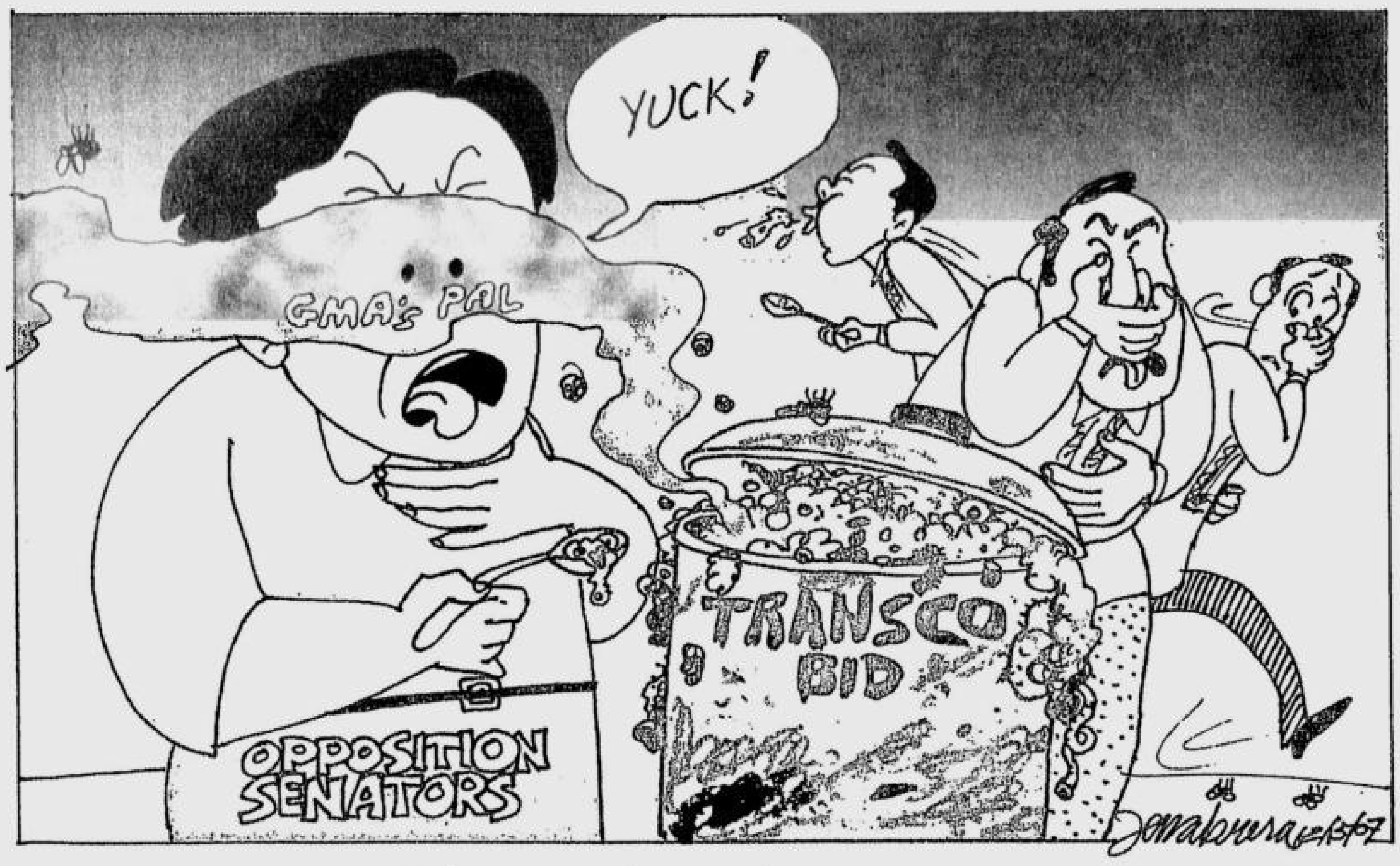

The reality of surveys

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

A LOT OF NONSENSE IS BEING UTTERED IN response to a recent Pulse Asia finding which shows that 42 percent of the respondents in the October 2007 "Ulat ng Bayan" survey consider Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo "the most corrupt president in Philippine history." Instead of disputing the scientific adequacy of the survey, defenders of Ms Arroyo have chosen to argue from outside science in order to impugn the validity of the Pulse Asia report.

One such defender, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, wants all survey firms investigated in order to compel them to reveal their funding sources, as if doing so would automatically erase their legitimacy as scientific outfits. She thinks that, like most everything in Philippine politics today, all surveys are for sale. While there may indeed be fly-by-night survey firms that deliver made-to-order findings especially during election time, this fact does not negate the reality of surveys as scientific instruments for measuring public opinion. Nor does it rule out the existence of survey firms that take their tasks seriously and willingly submit their work to the scrutiny of a larger scientific community.

The ultimate determinant of a survey firm's longevity is its ability to report the state of public perception as it measures it and not as the survey sponsor would like it to be. Serious polling organizations are not in the business of massaging egos or creating illusions. If they were, they would run out of clients who require objective information to guide their actions.

Another protector of the President, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, has come up with a theory. He says: "There is such a thing as determining the source to find out what the product is. So if that premise is correct then you can imagine to what extent we must give credence to the survey." He then suggests that the survey could be part of a destabilization effort. If Secretary Ermita's theory is true, then no science is possible. Every scientific effort would reflect the prejudices of public or private funding agencies.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye took a technical track that could have led him to something closer to a valid critique. "We therefore vehemently challenge the survey results, which could have been influenced by a number of distorting factors such as the sample, possible leading questions and even the person or persons who commissioned the survey." That is a mouthful of assertions. Secretary Bunye would need the assistance of someone trained in statistics and survey research to make this line stick, someone who could explain to him the rationality of probability sampling and questionnaire construction.

The INQUIRER editorial the other day has already referred to these lapses in logic. But let me press the argument further and say something about the "perception vs reality" line of defense. Presidential Management Staff chief Cerge Remonde was the chief bearer of this impoverished argument. He said that the judgment of "most corrupt president" was just a perception and was "far from reality." I suppose Secretary Remonde expects us to take his perception of Ms Arroyo as reality itself.

Of course, the Pulse Asia survey measured nothing but public perception. Perception is our only access, as human beings, to the reality of the social and natural worlds. We have no direct knowledge of the reality of the world "as it really is" against which we might compare our perceptions. We can only compare perception with perception, because what we call reality is indeed just another perception.

This is not to say that therefore all perceptions carry the same weight. What we learn in everyday life is that there are some perceptions we take as truths either because we trust their sources or because they are affirmed in our own encounters with the world, and there are others we dismiss as fantasies because our experience does not support them. This is not as simple as it may sound. Indeed, sociologists spend a lot of time uncovering the many hidden factors that shape our notions of truth and of fantasy.

But it is fascinating that even when we are told of the existence of hidden hands that direct and control the operations of survey firms and the mass media (our most abiding sources of information about the world), we seldom do anything about it. We do not stop buying newspapers or listening to the radio or TV. We still read what the surveys are saying about the state of public opinion. We may commission another study to replicate the same survey or buy another paper. But we never cultivate a systematic distrust of the reality reported to us by these media.

The reason for this is that as society becomes modern, perceptions and communications tend to cluster around specialized societal subsystems. It is society's response to complexity. Such differentiated spheres—like the mass media, science, politics, law, economy, art, etc.—evolve their own operations, codes, and acceptable communication that make manipulation increasingly difficult. Thus, Pulse Asia will not be able to offer its findings, nor the INQUIRER its news, to the highest bidder without at one point being called to account by its own professional personnel, or by the larger communities of which they are a part.

This is the face of the future, and the sooner we learn to accept it, the easier it will be for us to get past the crises in which we are presently stuck.

***

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

Shameful!

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THE ORDER OF AGRARIAN REFORM SECRETARY Nasser Pangandaman regarding the petition of the Sumilao farmers for the cancellation and/or revocation of the conversion order covering 144 hectares of land in San Vicente, Sumilao, Bukidnon, has got to rank among the most shameful sellouts yet by any DAR [Department of Agrarian Reform] chief. Pangandaman's apparent brown-nosing makes his predecessors, flawed as they may have been, look like stalwart defenders of farmers in particular and of social justice in general.

Forget the fact that under DAR rules, the land should not have been allowed conversion in the first place, not only because it had already been served notice of coverage under compulsory acquisition, but also because as irrigated land, it was considered as "non-negotiable for conversion." (The reason for this must be obvious: given the proportionately small land area served by an irrigation system as against the total agricultural land area, whatever irrigated land there is must be preserved for agriculture.)

Forget also the fact that when the Office of the President (Fidel Ramos) reversed then Agrarian Reform Secretary Ernesto Garilao's final ruling disallowing conversion, the Sumilao farmers had already been awarded the land (Certificate of Land Ownership Award or CLOA)—and the (Ruben) Torres (then executive secretary) decision in effect revoked that award. Pangandaman cannot be blamed for those travesties.

But what cannot be forgiven is: in issuing his highly reprehensible order, Pangandaman seems to have deliberately overlooked DAR's own rules and regulations governing conversion of agricultural lands for non-agricultural uses—rules that were formulated for the purpose, among others, of making sure that the conversion would not be used to circumvent CARP. Let's quote some of those rules, with which non-compliance, according to DAR, will constitute grounds for the revocation of a conversion order.

"Section 23. Effects of Approval of Conversion.—The approval of an application for conversion shall have, but not limited to, the following effects:

"(a) It shall be **limited to the specific use of the land authorized in the conversion order;**

"(b) It shall be subject to the schedule indicated in the detailed site development plan and work and financial plan, but **in no case shall the period of development extend beyond five (5) years from issuance of the conversion order** except as authorized by the Secretary or the approving official on meritorious grounds;

"(c) The conditions thereof shall be **binding upon successors-in-interest** of the property;

....

"(e) The authorized use in the order of conversion shall be annotated on the title of the subject property; ..."

Pangandaman had to be aware—because his field officers told him so (I must congratulate DAR Regional Director John Maruhom and the DAR municipal, provincial and regional officers who made the assessment, they do their institution and country proud)—that there was still no development on the converted land after five years.

He had to be aware that San Miguel's piggery is about as far a cry as one can get from the approved conversion plan that included educational institutions, hotels, zoo, sports complex, vegetable and cereal processing plants, recreation areas, etc.

Moreover, Pangandaman had to be aware that San Miguel not only had violated the strict rules governing the conversion of the property (as his people apprised him in great detail), but also acted in bad faith when it set up its piggery. San Miguel cannot plead ignorance, because the authorized use of the land was annotated on the title (as was the fact that a CLOA had been issued to the farmers) as the rules required.

Yet, despite all these, Pangandaman sat on the petition of the Sumilao farmers (submitted in 2004), and the Maruhom memorandum (mid-2005). He sat idly by as San Miguel started to build its pig pens (on irrigated land!); for more than two years—employing dilatory tactics (dismissing the case for lack of jurisdiction)—until the 1,700-kilometer march of the farmers forced him off his behind.

Then he sold them out.

One would think two years would be sufficient for Pangandaman to make up his mind—and what's to think, after all? Or, if he needed more time, one would think he would tell San Miguel to cease and desist undertaking its development activities—because such activities, if they continue and reach completion, might not only be harmful to the agricultural land, but would make any revocation academic.

But no. His order effectively recognizes San Miguel's ownership and possession. (Does that mean he does not think the firm is a buyer in bad faith?) Worse, his order to San Miguel to "refrain from further undertaking development activities" (which sounds like a cease-and-desist order) is spoiled by the qualifier "other than those presently ongoing."

Why? Because the term "development activities presently ongoing" is so broad that San Miguel could claim that its entire seven-year development plan is ongoing. So there is, effectively, no restraint on San Miguel. *Tuloy ang ligaya. Tuloy ang* screw-the-farmers scheme. They are marginalized.

All these, sanctioned by Pangandaman, whose order sounds innocuous enough, but in fact spells victory for those who are part of the plan to circumvent land reform, and sounds the death knell of the struggle of the indigenous Higaonons who only wanted to get back a part of the land that was taken from them not once (when Christian settlers grabbed their land), but twice (when their CLOA was revoked in favor of a conversion order that was a sham).

Shame on Pangandaman. And shame on San Miguel.

A Filipino definition of social justice

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

IN ELEMENTARY ECONOMICS, ONE LEARNS that the welfare of society definitely improves when any one gets better off while no one else gets worse off; it definitely deteriorates when any one gets worse off while no one else gets better off. This is called the principle of **efficiency**. Unfortunately, most economics teachers go no further than this principle.

The most common real situations are those where some gain while others lose, requiring some evaluation of the gains and losses in order to assess the effect on social welfare. Such situations require principles of **justice or fairness** that take precedence over the principle of efficiency.

For instance, is it fairer that the Quisumbing estate be owned by the Sumilao farmer-tillers, who walked all the way from Bukidnon to Manila, as Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) beneficiaries, or that the estate be owned by San Miguel Farms as buyer from Quisumbing? Whose welfare should matter more? And who should be the judge of that?

In my view, the final judge of fairness in a case like Sumilao is not any single individual, but the Filipino people as a whole, reaching a consensus in a democratic manner. Proof of the existence of social justice with respect to agrarian reform does not depend on what is merely declared legal by the ruling order, if the result is so widely unacceptable as to keep revolutionary fires burning in rural Philippines.

Here is the best Filipino definition of social justice that I have seen so far:

"Social justice, for us Filipinos, means a coherent, intelligible system of law, made known to us, enacted by a legitimate government freely chosen by us, and enforced fairly and equitably by a courageous, honest, impartial, and competent police force, legal profession and judiciary, that **first**, respects our rights and our freedoms both as individuals and as a people;

"**second**, seeks to repair the injustices that society has inflicted on the poor by eliminating poverty as rapidly as our resources and our ingenuity permit;

"**third**, develops a self-directed and self-sustaining economy that distributes its benefits to meet, at first, the basic material needs of all, then to provide an improving standard of living for all, but particularly for the lower income groups, with time enough and space to allow them to take part in and enjoy our culture;

"**fourth**, changes our institutions and structures, our ways of doing things and relating to each other, so that whatever inequalities remain are not caused by those institutions or structures, unless inequality is needed temporarily to favor the least favored and its cost is borne by the most favored; and

"**fifth**, adopts means and processes that are capable of attaining those objectives."

Those are the words of the revered patriot Jose W. Diokno, in his essay "A Filipino concept of justice" published in Solidarity magazine in 1983.

It is clear that Diokno was influenced by the American philosopher John Rawls ("A Theory of Justice," Harvard University Press, 1971), but that does not make his definition any less Filipino. What matters is whether the ideas are acceptable, as I think they are, to the Filipino people as a whole.

Rawls conceived of a social contract drawn up, as it were, by unborn souls who are aware of the world's economic and political history, but who, due to a "veil of ignorance," do not know the circumstances in which they will be born. They do not know if their parents will be rich or poor, powerful or powerless. They know that genes differ, but they do not know what genes they will inherit. They do not know what their gender or race will be. They do not know when they will be born.

In such circumstances, Rawls argued, the unborn souls will play safe by adopting a social contract that emphasizes **minimal demands**. They know that not everyone can be rich, but they also know that the world's resources can afford a certain minimal standard of living for everyone. They will outlaw slavery and discrimination according to gender or race. They will allow differential rewards for differential talents, provided that such talents are used to improve the conditions of the poorest people. They will agree on rates of saving and of conservation of natural resources that ensure that sacrifices are equally borne by all generations.

Rawls' two principles of justice are:

1. "Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others." This is the Priority of Liberty.

2. "Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all." This is the Priority of Justice over Efficiency.

Rawls' "General Conception" is: "All social primary goods—liberty and opportunity, income and wealth, and the bases of self-respect—are to be distributed equally unless an unequal distribution of any or all of these goods is to the advantage of the least favored."

These principles are clearly compatible with the Catholic Church's call for a preferential option for the poor. They are not incompatible with any religion.

In evaluating national progress, these principles of justice would prioritize statistics on poverty and hunger over the Gross National Product, which is merely correlated with the profits of the rich.

* * *

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What makes schools effective?

COMMENTARY

Butch Hernandez

JOHN B. BOGART, CITY EDITOR OF THE NEW York Sun in the late 1800s once said that "When a dog bites a man, that is not news because it happens so often. But if a man bites a dog, that is news." A variant of this is, "You never read about a plane that did not crash," and "You don't hear about the laws that a politician did not break."

The point, of course, is that people's attention is more often drawn to the unusual, with the more dire exerting the stronger pull.

In the various fora on education initiatives that I've joined, the presentations that elicited the most murmurs were usually those that discussed what ails public education today. The "gorier" the details, the louder the murmurs get.

On the other hand, talking about ways to make things right requires a bit more effort, especially if you actually want people to respond positively. When the issue is education, you really need to know what makes schools effective in the first place before you can even begin outlining some sort of improvement plan.

Dr. Evelyn Mejillano, the resident academic and education expert of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWWPP), and Dr. Celia Adriano, director of the UP Diliman Interactive Learning Center and a dear friend of FWWPP's Education Revolution, both say that you need not reinvent the wheel. Dr. Adriano in particular is wont to ask, "What does research tell you?"

Since the 1990s, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) has been gathering and analyzing education data in line with the Jomtien Declaration, which is more known as "Education For All."

Unesco's 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report, titled "The Quality Imperative," says a solid body of evidence provides guidance on what makes schools effective. The report recommends that policies aimed at better learning must focus on certain key elements, preferably uniformly. These elements are cited below in no particular order of importance.

Teacher quality is one. "The Quality Imperative" says countries that have achieved high learning standards—such as Singapore and Korea—have invested steadily in the teaching profession. "Training models have to be reconsidered to strengthen school-based pre- and in-service training rather than ... rely on lengthy, institutional pre-service training."

Learning time is another. Test scores clearly show that "the amount of class time spent on mathematics, science and language strongly affects performance on these subjects." The 850 to 1,000 hours of instruction per year for all pupils is an internationally accepted benchmark of contact time. Yet many countries fall below this norm.

The next factor addresses education quality at its most basic: functional literacy. This is so important that former Undersecretary Isagani R. Cruz of the Department of Education points out that the main objective of the Revised Basic Education Curriculum (RBEC) is "to produce functionally literate Filipinos." Dr. Cruz adds that "functional literacy is reading to know how to act, [acting] according to what we have read, [feeling] what we read, [reading] in order to feel and think."

Teaching styles and strategies—or pedagogy—are supremely critical for better learning. In ancient Greece, the "*paidagogos*" was usually a slave assigned to supervise the schooling of the children of his master. The Greek word literally means "to lead the child." The Unesco report says that "many commonly used teaching styles do not serve children well [as they are] often too rigid and rely heavily on rote learning." Many education experts—including the FWWPP's Mentoring the Mentors facilitation team—recommend "a combination of direct instruction, guided practice and independent learning, in a child-friendly environment."

Hand-in-hand with pedagogy is the language of instruction. Recent tests like the TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) and our own National Achievement Test tend to show that our vaunted superiority in English has slowly been eroded through the years. Education experts have repeatedly said that the best way to regain our English fluency would be to initially teach it using the language that the learner speaks at home during the early grades. This actually holds true for all subject areas.

Of course, an effective school is one that has adequate facilities and learning materials. The Unesco report maintains that "the quality and availability of learning materials strongly affect what teachers can do."

Finally, the Governance in Basic Education Act of 2001 (RA 9155) empowers school heads with instructional and administrative leadership over their respective schools. "Community Leadership" is a key strategic point in the private sector's 57-75 Movement to improve public education. The FWWPP's Education Revolution underscores the teacher's intrinsic role as a servant leader. Even the new Basic Education Curriculum, if it were a person, would have to be "a leader that sets standards, rather than a manager that imposes constraints," says Dr. Cruz.

The preceding elements must be present in any plan to make schools effective. A careful consideration of these factors translates into systemic and meaningful education reform. Leadership by school heads and private sector education stakeholders will bind it all together.

Butch Hernandez is the executive director of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power. E-mail comments to butchhernandez@gmail.com

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Burma must not be forgotten

COMMENTARY

Gordon Brown
and Nicolas Sarkozy

JUST TWO MONTHS AGO, THE WORLD WAS shocked and outraged by the violent repression of peaceful demonstrations that took place in Burma. The images may have vanished from our screens. But we cannot and will not forget the plight of the Burmese people.

A country which has the natural resources to be an economic powerhouse is instead the sick man of Southeast Asia. As the rest of the region advances into the digital age, Burma is in danger of retreating to the dark ages. Cut off from the outside world and denied access not only to democracy and respect for human rights, but also to proper education and basic economic rights, its society is in a state of disarray. The huge demonstrations and protests over recent months have shown that the Burmese people have been pushed beyond breaking point by the regime.

Last week a new generation of leaders gathered in Singapore to mark an important milestone: 40 years of Asean [Association of Southeast Asian Nations]. We welcomed that celebration: Asean today represents a proud and prosperous region standing at the heart of the global economy, its voice heard and respected across the world. Asean's leaders faced the twin challenges of enshrining a charter that commits them to respect democratic and human rights, while dealing with the ongoing crisis in Burma. The Burmese government was sent a clear message: there is no going back. We agree.

It is obvious now that the country is in a downward spiral of poverty and unrest. Like the European Union, Asean has always understood that economic growth and open markets cannot be pursued in isolation: good economics are founded on good politics. But the politics of Burma are poisoned, and now need urgently to be transformed, for the wider health of the region.

We welcome the positive and conciliatory statement issued on Nov. 9 by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, holder of the Nobel Prize for Peace and figurehead of the Burmese opposition. She signaled her desire to begin soon a meaningful and time-bound dialogue with the Burmese regime. She also emphasized the need for a growing role of the United Nations in Burma, and underlined the need to engage with other political forces, including Burma's ethnic nationalities. Those are welcome steps.

It's high time the regime engaged in a genuine dialogue. In this respect, the regime must remove restraints on Suu Kyi, give unfettered access to Ibrahim Gambari, the UN secretary general's special envoy, and heed the recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Paul Sergio Pinheiro. And they must enter wholeheartedly into a dialogue with Suu Kyi as well as with other opposition groups and ethnic leaders.

The goal must be genuine reconciliation and political transition. Nobody imagines that this process will be quick or simple. Burma is a complex mixture of ethnicity, religion and culture. The process will need to be broadly based and inclusive, taking careful account of the need to build a lasting stability which includes Burma's key political and ethnic groups. The neighboring countries are well placed to support and encourage such a process. And although the military dictatorship must end, the military itself must continue to play an important role in any future government, as Suu Kyi herself has acknowledged.

Faced by the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Burma, the international community, and in particular the European Union, has already extended its aid to address the needs of the most vulnerable people. The EU has also decided to reinforce existing sanctions against Burma in order to send a strong political message, and has consequently established a new series of targeted sanctions against the military regime. Likewise, the EU has made clear that it stands fully ready to review, amend or reinforce existing restrictive measures in the light of developments on the ground and the results of Gambari's Good Offices Mission. We believe that positive change will be best encouraged by following a carrot and stick approach: a combination of restrictive, targeted measures on the one hand; and the alleviation of these measures as well as the prospect of a comprehensive economic initiative on the other. However, this move will become possible if, and only if, there is a clear signal that a genuine transformation leading to a new, democratic government of Burma is under way.

The prize for Burma's long-suffering people—and for neighbors who have suffered too long from the problems of refugees, narcotics and instability which spill across Burma's borders—is great indeed: a prosperous, stable Burma living up to its economic potential and adding to the region's economic dynamism.

But achieving that prize will require sustained engagement and real mobilization by the international community. We will continue to stand by the Burmese people as they prepare to mark 60 years of independence. We hope that 2008 will finally bring peace and reconciliation to Burma.

Gordon Brown is the prime minister of the United Kingdom; Nicolas Sarkozy is the president of France.

The brave bunch

YOUNG BLOOD

Mary Tyrene L. Delgado

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I CONSIDER MYSELF LUCKY TO HAVE BEEN IN THE COMpany of the bravest bunch of people anyone will ever meet. The members of this group are not trained to develop courage the way soldiers are taught to be. They are not paid to defy the laws of gravity like stuntmen. And unlike thrill-seekers, they do not cheat death just for the so-called "rush."

They are brave because they find themselves in a situation that forces them to be brave. They fight because losing is not an option. Every day they do their best to defeat the challenges brought about by a glitch in nature. They cheat death because staying alive is the better choice.

They are kids. Kids who happen to be sick. Kids who happen to have cancer.

I wish I could say there are only a few of them, but the turnout of sick children during the Christmas party last Dec. 7 at the Philippine Children's Medical Center, sponsored by Project: Brave Kids, showed there are many of them. And the faces I saw at the party were but a few among the many ailing children from one department of one hospital here in our country. The disturbing fact is that there are many other such children out there.

The sight of such children used to feel like a quick, if brief, stab in the heart for me. I would feel sorry for them, but promptly turn to the next page of the newspaper I was reading or switch to another channel showing something lighter than a bald, sick kid asking for help.

Everything changed six years ago when my youngest brother became one of them. At the age of 7, Nichi was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia. Then sick children ceased to be merely statistics or pictures to me. Sick children became a reality that hit me, as well as the rest of my family, so hard it seemed impossible to recover from its blow.

But Nichi, just like his friends, was brave. Probably the bravest. I never thought he had it in him to fight so gallantly, but his disease made a warrior out of him. He would offer the doctors his hand, his back and even his pelvis for the injection of chemo drugs, intrathecal, and bone marrow aspirations. He'd try to ignore the torture of his regular medical procedures by focusing on the incentive we offered him: a meal at McDonald's, one order of "chao fan" with soup at Chowking, a chicken meal at KFC or *sisig* at Dencio's.

Amid his treatment, he always remained positive that his sacrifices, that enduring the pain of one needle after another puncturing his young skin, would be rewarded. He never lost his sense of humor or his "star qualities." He continued to sing and dance as if nothing was wrong with him. He never stopped dreaming and building up ambitions for the future.

Of course, Nichi had his low moments. Sometimes he cried, but he didn't let feeling sorry for himself rule him. He knew when to admit that he was afraid, and this made him braver. At one point, he lost his vision on his left eye, but it didn't stop him from joining and winning drawing contests. He did worry about his good eye, but I remember him telling me, "OK *na rin lang na mawala 'yung isa kong mata*. At least, *hindi ko na kailangang mag-alala parati* (It's OK if I lose my other eye. At least, I wouldn't have to worry about it anymore)."

Despite religiously following his doctors' orders, Nichi's body had its limits. Early this year, his condition started to deteriorate. This happened a few months after he lost his vision. Armed with a strong will, Nichi did everything he could to remain in control of his body. Although he could hardly hold a microphone, he still tried to hit the notes while lying down because that was what he was—a performer who wanted to sing. Even when his motor skills were betraying him, he did his best to press the keys of his green PlayStation 2 control pad because that was who he was—a child who wanted to play.

Eventually, his body's weakness hindered him from doing the things he loved to do. He was in tears when he said: "*Wala nang* adventure *ang buhay ko. Parati na lang ako tulog-gising, tulog-gising* (There's no more adventure in my life. All I do is sleep and wake up, sleep and wake up)."

This was a 13-year-old boy who wanted to live. Perhaps, that was the most painful thing about letting Nichi go. We all knew that given a choice, Nichi would rather keep on fighting. After all, he had all the reasons to live. But what had to happen was beyond any of us. On the night of July 24 this year, my youngest brother, the bravest person I knew, let out his final breath in the presence of the people who loved him most.

Until his final hour, Nichi was aware of what was happening to him and he knew that it wouldn't be long before the inevitable came. My Dad mustered the courage to tell him, "*Kapag pagod ka na, pwede ka nang sumama kay* Papa Jesus (If you feel tired, then you may go to Papa Jesus)." Nichi matched Dad's courage by nodding.

Nichi died peacefully. He didn't struggle. He didn't show any signs of fear. His lifeless body was decorated with a smile on its face.

Christmas Eve will mark the fifth month of Nichi's death. I'm afraid that it will be our saddest Christmas of all.

This was why I insisted that our family should be part of the Christmas party for children like our Nichi. So that the bereaved sister, brother, mother and father might still feel the beauty of Christmas. So that after losing what little strength we have because of grief, we can draw some courage from children who, like Nichi, really have no room for fear in their lives.

Nichi in his short life has become our family's source of strength. Now that he is no longer around, we feel a little lost. But being in the company of sick kids who probably are the bravest bunch of people one will ever meet, my family's hurt has been partly healed. We each needed the strength those kids radiated. We needed to be infected by their bravery so that we can again hope that despite all that happened, everything will be OK some time soon.

Mary Tyrene L. Delgado, 27, is a senior product planner for Hallmark Cards.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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Better without English?

LETTERS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

CONRADO DE QUIROS SHARES AN INTERESTING thought on the role of language in development. ("Babel," INQUIRER, 12/5/07) Is the failure of the Philippines to live up to its much-touted potential the result of our well-documented proficiency in English? He writes, in part: "We speak better English than our Southeast Asian neighbors, but look at our Southeast Asian neighbors ... and you'll see that nearly all of them have left us biting their dust. Singapore certainly has. Malaysia certainly has. Even Indonesia and Vietnam .... Maybe it has to do with language .... Those of us who keep emphasizing English as a way to communicate with tourists and to find jobs abroad ... may think we are saying the most commonsensical thing in the world. But other people would find that the battiest thing in the world. The primary function of language is not for a people to communicate with foreigners, it is for a people to communicate with themselves. The primary function of language is not for a government to communicate with other governments, it is for a government to communicate with its citizens. Maybe that's the reason they are what they are now and we are what we are now."

It's something to think about, but frankly, I think his message is flawed. The primary function of language is to communicate, period. To limit it to communication by people "with themselves" or by a government "with its citizens" is dangerous and could lead to even more damaging close-mindedness at a time when, really, what is needed more is greater openness and communication between peoples and between nations. And he sees a possible cause where I think there is none when he says, "Maybe that's the reason they are what they are now and we are what we are now .... because they have found a way to talk to one another and tell one another exactly what to do. Maybe we've been reduced to looking for menial jobs in foreign companies or foreign shores because we've found a way to talk only to our employers and masters. Maybe they've been invited to the gala because they have interpreters who can tell the other guests what they're saying and so engage them in conversation. Maybe we serve as waiters in the same event because we know enough to offer them a glass of wine and a smile."

Some of those waiters that he talks about would probably even be thankful they know English well enough to have those jobs. Would they want to have better jobs, with more authority? Sure. But is language to blame for their not being qualified for such "higher" jobs? I don't think so. So why, indeed, are our Southeast Asian neighbors seemingly doing better than we are? We all know why—it's their greater emphasis on education, and better governance.

Some may even argue that they simply work harder than us. But they're doing better not because they know less English than we do. Assuming they're doing better (and ever the optimist, I am not ready to concede this point), they're doing it despite the fact that they don't speak English as well as we do. My two cents.

—GIGO ALAMPAY,
alampay@gmail.com

World losing in its struggle to save environment

EVERYBODY IS TALKING ABOUT GLOBAL warming and climate change. However, it is very obvious that the solution to the problem should start from us.

Who are the worst polluters? Aside from the factories and transport groups, business establishments belong to this group. Look at the plastic bags used by the malls, the styrofoam of the food chains. Plastics and styrofoam are nonbiodegradable. They clog our drainage and pollute our environment. What are we doing?

Economists, sociologists and political scientists say that Mother Earth's problems reflect the political and social dynamic in our society. America, the No. 1 polluter, cannot be checked because it holds economic and military power. The malls worship profit regardless of the consequences of their pursuits to the environment.

In the fight for the environment, there must be political will and every nation must be involved. The nations must come to their senses and regulate the activities of the biggest polluters among them. The nations must unite to safeguard the common interests of the peoples of the world.

Unless the government starts with the use of reusable bags or containers and prohibit the use of styrofoam and plastics, the environmental policies of the government will not have any credibility. The Arroyo administration has shown its attitude toward the cause of environmental protection. Indeed, its liberal mining laws have opened the floodgates to the wanton destruction of our natural resources. Sadly, as far as the Philippines is concerned, we are losing the environmental war.

—V. EMMANUEL C. FONTANILLA,
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Monte Oro to pay only 25% of Transco bid price, balance in 15 yrs

SHANGHAI—THE MONTE ORO consortium that won the right to operate the Philippines' National Transmission Corp. (Transco) only needs to pay 25 percent of the acquisition price when the deal is closed, an official of China's State Grid Corp. said.

The consortium that won control of Transco with a $3.95-billion bid in the biggest privatization in the country's history, included State Grid, the Philippines' Monte Oro Grid Resources and Calaca High Power Corp.

State Grid, the dominant grid operator in China—the world's second largest electricity market after the United States—holds a 40-percent equity stake in the consortium.

The remaining 75 percent would be paid to the Philippine government over 15 years, Sun Jinping, head of State Grid's international cooperation division, told Reuters in a telephone interview.

Goldman Sachs was State Grid's financial adviser for the purchase, Sun said.

"That would mean the consortium will only need to pay less than $1 billion initially, and we will just contribute slightly under $400 million. We feel the size of the deal is suitable to us," Sun said.

"And we don't need to put in lots of manpower into this, either," he said.

Reasonable returns

State Grid expects to reap "reasonable" returns from its maiden overseas acquisition.

"We believe the returns will be acceptable and reasonable to us," Sun said.

Sun declined to provide a figure.

But he said the deal structure, an improvement in the tariff regime of the Philippines' power sector, as well as the expertise State Grid can bring to Transco, would make the investment a success.

"We have developed our core competitiveness through years of rapid expansion at home. We can apply our technology and managerial know-how to Transco," he said.

More lucrative

Political uncertainty and doubts about the predictability of profits tripped up Manila's previous sale efforts but a new tariff system for Transco, in operation since last year, is supposed to make the 25-year license more lucrative for investors.

Transco needs about $850 million over the next five years for upgrades and expansion.

Manila has yet to officially declare that the consortium is the winning bidder as it needs about a month to evaluate its bid, Sun said.

Green light

State Grid, the world's largest grid company by revenue—which reached 852.9 billion yuan ($115.7 billion) in 2006—believes it can win the green light from the Philippine Congress to run Transco, although the process is expected to last for about a year, Sun said.

There has been speculation that political opponents of President Macapagal-Arroyo may seek to block the deal.

There has also been talk in Manila that the deal was rigged. But Sun said his company strictly followed the Philippine law and regulations in making the bid.

5th attempt

Manila has been trying since 2003 to privatize the management of Transco to boost state finances and modernize its creaking power sector. Wednesday's auction was the fifth attempt and the second this year.

Proceeds from the sale would be used to pare some of the $6-$7 billion debt at the state-run National Power Corp. (Napocor), once the single biggest drain on state finances. *Reuters*

'A Jurassic legal step,' GMA foes, allies agree

From page A1

ism," Olalia told the INQUIRER in a text message, referring to the infamous US Sen. Joseph McCarthy's campaign to flush out communists and their sympathizers during the Cold War era.

"That is a step backward. The language is so vague that it could be justifiably accused of unconstitutional infringement of the freedom of assembly and association. Just because you are a member of a party does not mean that you are guilty of whatever some members have committed. That would be guilt by association, which has already been rejected by our Supreme Court," said Santiago, a former judge and the Philippines' nominee to the Geneva-based International Court of Justice.

Pointless, stupid

Under Republic Act No. 1700, or the Anti-Subversion Law, membership in such organizations as the Communist Party of the Philippines was a crime. It was repealed in 1992 through RA 7636, thus making the CPP a legal group.

Olalia warned the public that a revival of RA 1700—which Sorsogon Rep. Jose Solis, a former law enforcer and a staunch supporter of Ms Arroyo, plans to seek—would violate the basic rights to due process and association and lead to more arbitrary arrests.

Said Ocampo in a statement: "Reviving it is pointless, stupid even. Mrs. Arroyo ought to rethink her mindless support for [Solis' planned measure], which the dictator Marcos used to arrest and detain tens of thousands without charges under martial law."

The party-list lawmaker said the President had made a "180-degree turn" in her position on human rights.

He said that while Ms Arroyo vowed to work for "zero political violence" only on Wednesday at the Human Rights Day celebration in Malacañang, she threw her support behind the planned revival of the Anti-Subversion Law 24 hours later.

Ms Arroyo had said she would use the measure in her avowed goal of crushing the decades-old communist insurgency by the time her term ends in 2010.

But Ocampo pointed out that the law had failed to stop the communist insurgency.

Sensitive to opinion

He added: "Mrs. Arroyo will fail because she refuses to recognize the legitimate aspirations of the revolutionaries, whom she derisively calls 'terrorists.'

"Now she wants to tag them again as 'subversives' and wants to revive the law against them."

Senator Santiago does not expect the proposed revival of RA 1700 to gain much support in the Senate.

"Considering that the Senate is opposition-dominated, plus because of the constitutional issues that [the plan] raises, I don't think it would gain any ground in the Senate, or even in the House," Santiago said.

"These two chambers of the legislature are very sensitive to public opinion, and I think it is indefensible to be able to arrest and prosecute a person just because he or she is a member of a political group. That is antidemocratic," she said.

Sen. Loren Legarda said reviving the Anti-Subversion Law would only worsen the insurgency problem:

"[It] will just force people's organizations to go underground. It will further swell the ranks of those who see armed struggle as the only remaining option to effect change.

"Such a law has no place in a democracy. It can lead to draconian, inquisition-type actions by the government, which could worsen the climate of impunity that has led to a big number of political killings and disappearances."

Sen. Mar Roxas said reviving RA 1700 would "turn the hands of time to an era where might is right, and freedom is defined, not by one's ability to think and act freely, but by espousing only the ideas and actions most acceptable to the powers that be."

Make do with HSA

"That we have the longest running communist insurgency in Asia is a function of poor governance, widespread injustice, and too much corruption," Roxas said.

Senate President Manuel Villar said the Arroyo administration should just make do with current laws, such as the Human Security Act (HSA), or antiterror law.

"Reviving RA 1700 is retrogressive. It is like going back to the primitive years when we label people as 'communists' and 'insurgents,'" Villar said.

"If it was repealed at a time when insurgent forces were more numerous and more influential than they are today, there is no reason to bring back to life this law against a group that the government itself claims is near death," he said.

According to Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., the only reason Ms Arroyo is thinking of reviving the law is to "consolidate" more authoritarian power.

"In her hands, the law, once revived, could mean a thousand torments for every man or woman who disagrees with her, demonstrates against her, or supports her political opponents," Pimentel said.

Poverty, social injustice

At the House, Muntinlupa Rep. Rufino Rozzano Biazon said another law penalizing dissenters for their political views would only give them reason to become armed insurgents.

"The continued insurgency is not caused by the absence of an Anti-Subversion Law but by the continued existence of poverty exacerbated by social injustice, abuse by government authorities and corruption," Biazon, a vice chair of the House committee on national defense, added in a text message.

The militant labor alliance Kilusang Mayo Uno, through its chair Elmer Labog, said Ms Arroyo should not "resurrect a corpse."

"It seems the President and Congressman Solis want a return to the Stone Age by turning back on democracy. What they want is for the barbarism of dictatorship to reign in Philippine society," Labog said.

Survival game plan

Fernando Hicap, national chair of the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, said the planned revival of the Anti-Subversion Law was part of the Arroyo administration's "survival game plan."

"She is endorsing this shotgun piece of legislation to justify the extrajudicial killings and massive persecution of political foes and critics exposing her crimes against the Filipino people, and against those championing the cause of truth and justice in the country," Hicap said.

With reports from Jerome Aning and Norman Bordadora

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INTERFAITH RALLY VS GMA: Religious leaders, faith-based organizations and cause-oriented groups gather in Baywalk, Roxas Boulevard, for an interfaith prayer assembly with a message: "To reject a morally bankrupt Arroyo government," which is what the huge banner says. Speakers included former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and Lingayen Archbishop Oscar Cruz. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

Tougher laws needed to beat Reds, says Esperon

From page A1

in their homelands."

Esperon expressed the belief that the revival of the Anti-Subversion Law would have no adverse effect on the stalled peace talks with the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army.

He said that while he had not formally recommended a prolonged ceasefire with the insurgents, Malacañang's recent announcement of a 22-day suspension of military operations from Dec. 16 to Jan. 6 was already an indication of the government's intent to talk peace with the CPP-NPA.

"You can take the cue from here ... I have even proposed a three-year ceasefire before we go on peace talks. It's useless going on peace talks if you don't have a ceasefire," Esperon said, adding that solving the insurgency problem would also solve the extrajudicial killings.

He also said that if the CPP was after political reforms, it should return to the negotiating table.

NPA 'thriving'

Esperon said the repeal of the Anti-Subversion Law had allowed the NPA to thrive.

"They say that the [CPP] is a legal organization. But we know that the regional commanders and provincial secretaries are party members. And they are the ones that are running the organization of the [NPA]," Esperon said.

"It is the party that leads all these armed groups at the regional, provincial, district, even section level. They have the party member there, so how can we continue allowing the [CPP] to be with the [NPA] and be faulted only if they are actually caught with the armed group?" he said.

Esperon said while a new Anti-Subversion Law should not penalize persons on the basis of mere membership in the CPP, it should impose the same strict measures of other countries on internal security.

"It's more on the actions, like when you are seen with armed groups or when you are campaigning and armed groups join you, or when your campaign materials are recovered in encounters. Those things should be punishable under this proposed law," Esperon said.

He said such provisions in the Human Security Act as the imposition of a P500,000 fine for an unlawful arrest had limited the AFP's "full application" of operations in the field.

"It deprives [us] of rapidity that, of course, should go with the usual caution. But just the same, we need some rapidity," Esperon said.

Dawn Masses unique to RP, rite of passage to Loboc band

From page A1

brating Christmas nine days earlier than the rest of the Universal Church," explained Fr. Genaro Diwa, liturgical minister of the Archdiocese of Manila.

The Catholic Church in the Philippines received an "indult" or a special permission from the Vatican to conduct dawn Masses, he says.

Interesting sidebar

In Loboc, it is an interesting sidebar for a band of musicians, one song at the dawn Mass that makes all the difference in their musical career.

"Before one can become a member of the Loboc Band, he will have to sing solo at the Simbang Gabi," says composer-arranger Rene Balbin.

Balbin, Loboc's resident bandmaster for the past 20 years, says this rule has been practiced since the band started during the Spanish period.

The *calenda*, which is how the song is called, is sung before the dawn Mass on Dec. 24 when virtually all the faithful are present.

"The song was originally in Spanish but it was translated to Cebuano during the Second World War," Balbin says.

The song tells the story of the people who were present when Christ was born.

Life-changing

Balbin, who was initiated when he was 11, says the experience is "life-changing."

The prospective band member is chosen not on the basis of age, but on his readiness.

As early as October, the chosen member is informed so he can practice the calenda which is about seven minutes long.

After the successful initiation on Dec. 24, the band goes to the new member's house and they celebrate with a feast that includes the traditional lechon.

Despite the band's dwindling number—currently 30 when they used to have as many as 80—there is a new member initiated every year.

Balbin says he is training some 300 recruits, assuring the people of Loboc that the calenda is here to stay.

Loboc children's choir

Another highlight of the season in this town is the Loboc Children's Choir.

The critically acclaimed group is one of three choirs that will alternately provide music for the duration of the Simbang Gabi here.

"They are the ones assigned because this Mass is for the youth," says Fr. Alger Angcla, Loboc parish priest.

The Loboc Children's Choir, which has won critical acclaim in music festivals abroad, is as much an attraction here as the town's observance of the traditional dawn Mass.

"People from other places call ahead and inquire when the children are singing so they can adjust their schedules," Angcla says.

Preparing for Christ

Simbang Gabi is traditionally a "Mass of thanksgiving," says Diwa.

Nine novena Masses are celebrated to give thanks for the gift of faith that we have received as a nation and, of course, for the gift of Christmas that is Christ, he explains.

Diwa adds that the Simbang Gabi is the Filipino way of preparing to receive "the greatest gift of all" this season.

Gestating with Mary

"A big gift needs a big container. The gift of Christmas is Christ, our salvation. That is why we need to prepare and enlarge our hearts," he says.

According to Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, spokesperson for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the Simbang Gabi is also the Filipino's way of accompanying Mary as the Christ "gestates" in her womb.

At the same time, the faithful also "gestates" Christ in their hearts.

"We enter into the spirit of Mary herself, who gestated Jesus in her womb. We wait for that time when Jesus is 'born' into our lives," says Quitorio, pointing out that this depicts the Marian character of the dawn Masses, and of the Filipino faith in general.

Historically, however, Filipino farmers chose to hear Mass at dawn, before they went to the fields.

Unique to Filipinos

During advent, the Universal Church is in a penitential mood, with the priest wearing violet garments to signify the act of waiting. The Filipinos, Diwa notes, enter a "quasi-celebratory mood" starting Dec. 16.

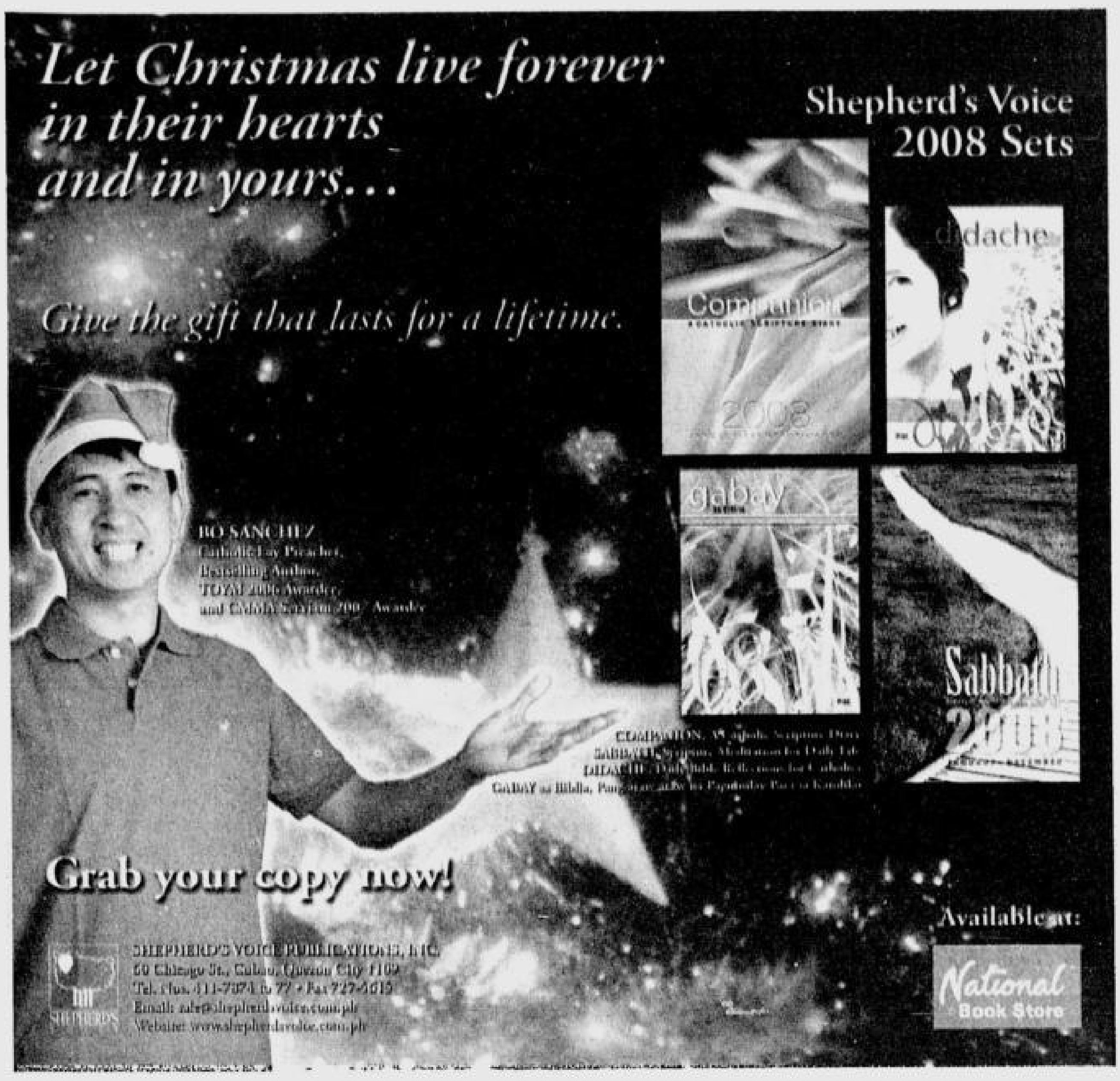
During the Simbang Gabi the priest wears his white garments and the faithful sing "Gloria," as if Christ is already born, he says. The Universal Church does not get to do this until Christmas Eve Mass.

Don't miss the Gift

"It is typical for Filipinos to be excited for Christmas," Diwa says.

However, he cautions: "We need to focus so that we don't miss out on the one great gift."

Particularly at this time when the country reels from problems and confusion, Diwa says, the faithful can use this opportunity as a nation to prepare for the birth of Christ in all our hearts—from the highest official in the land to the most ordinary citizen.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Assistant Editor **Tony Bergonia**

MILF agrees to unity talks with rival rebs

DAVAO CITY—HOPES WERE RAISED FOR THE UNIFICATION OF two rival Moro guerrilla groups after the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) agreed to start unity talks with the Moro National Liberation Front, a rebel spokesperson said yesterday.

Eid Kabalu, MILF civil-military affairs chief, said the agreement was reached during a meeting in Manila with the eldest son of Libyan President Moammar al-Ghadafi, who flew in on Wednesday.

Libya, a member of the influential 57-member Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), has been pushing for a unified Moro front since the MILF broke away from the MNLF in the 1980s.

No merger

But Kabalu said while the MILF and the MNLF agreed to work together, there was no agreement to merge the two forces into one Moro group.

Kabalu said leaders of the two groups, who met with Saiful Islam al-Ghadafi, also agreed on a timetable to finally bring peace to war-ravaged Mindanao.

GHADAFI

"We agreed to resolve the conflict not beyond September 2008 in accordance with a road map," said Kabalu. He attended the meeting with Ghadafi.

Those who signed the agreement for the MNLF were vice chair Hatimil Hassan, MNLF secretary general Muslimin Sema, Parouk Hussin, Abdul Sahirin and Tam Manjurza.

For the MILF, the signatories included Kabalu, MILF sharia chair Sheik Khalifa Nando, Sulu provincial chair Cesar Estino Alil, Basilan committee chair Hassan Lamla, and Abu Macacuna of the MILF's ceasefire committee.

Libyan help

Asked why it appears that only low-key MILF leaders represented the group in the meeting, Kabalu said they acted on behalf of the organization.

"We were authorized by the central committee and the agreement is binding to the MILF," he said.

Kabalu also said the MILF and the MNLF expressed their gratitude to Libya for its continuing support to the peace process.

Libya was instrumental in the 1996 peace deal between the government and the MNLF.

It has also poured millions of dollars in aid, mainly through the Ghadafi Foundation, to impoverished Moro communities in Mindanao.

The MILF is currently talking peace with the government and expects to sign a final peace agreement with the government before the regional elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in August next year.

Recently, government and MILF negotiators agreed on the territorial composition of the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity, a system that will govern the future Moro homeland.

Bigger than ARMM

Although both panels have been trying not to spill the beans on the extent of the territory, a source privy to the talks told the INQUIRER that it will be bigger than the ARMM, which was part of the 1996 peace agreement with the MNLF.

The ARMM was reduced to a five-province region when voters trashed Republic Act No. 9054, which sought the expansion of the region to 14 provinces, including Palawan. *Allan Nawal, Inquirer Mindanao*

'Cracker makers deny using manure

CITY OF MALOLOS—HURTING FROM claims that horse manure is being used in producing firecrackers, a leader of the pyrotechnic industry called the Department of Health "ignorant" about the manufacture of firecrackers and pyrotechnics.

Rolando Bonilla, vice president of the Philippine Pyrotechnic Manufacturers and Dealers Association Inc. (PPMDAI), said they never use horse manure in their production because it is explosive and will only jeopardize the lives of workers.

"They do not know what they are saying. They are ignorant when it comes to the pyrotechnic business," he said.

He was reacting to the warning of Baguio health officials on the use of firecrackers because many of these contain ingredients such as horse manure that carry the tetanus virus.

"We never use manure because it will give a negative chemistry to the chemicals we use. How can a (Baguio) doctor speculate on what we are doing?" he said. *Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

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THE CAMBUSAY cave in Alegria, Cebu.
PHOTOS BY TONEE DESPOJO/CEBU DAILY NEWS

ALEGRIA
Cebu's nature beauty

By **Jolene R. Bulambot**
Alegria, Cebu

MARVELOUS FORMATIONS of stalactites and stalagmites in various sizes and designs inside the caves of Alegria town in the southwestern tip of Cebu are attracting spelunkers, mountaineers and cave enthusiasts.

Once a sleepy town, Alegria, a fourth-class municipality (annual income: P13 million-P21 million) 115 kilometers from Cebu City, is gearing up to become a top ecotourism destination in Central Visayas, offering a wide variety of attractions, such as beautiful caves that are home to insect bats and other endemic creatures, magnificent waterfalls and lake.

The coastal town, known as Tubod in the 1800s for its flowing crystalline waters, faces the Tañon Strait, which separates Cebu and Negros islands. It is a perfect spot for divers because of a lush marine ecosystem where string rays, giant clams, green and table corals, and dolphins and other cetaceans abound, plus two underwater caves yet unexplored.

The municipal government, with the help of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is opening to the public two of the town's 58 caves, Silay and Kantayong.

Mayor Raul Guisadio promises a fun and awesome adventure for those who want to explore the caves, both in Barangay Valencia. The caves, he said, had already attracted local and foreign tourists.

Guided tours

The local government has trained 25 local spelunkers to guide cave enthusiasts, Guisadio said.

"We will make Alegria known for its beautiful spots and eventually be a center for ecotourism destination in the next few years. We are glad to let everyone see our beautiful caves, waterfalls, lake and seas," he said.

The town is allocating funds for the exploration of at least three more caves in the first quarter of next year and will soon ask help from the Department of Tourism for promotion.

Of the 58 caves, only a few have been explored and two were initially approved by the DENR as ecotourism destinations because of guaranteed safety for tourists.

Guisadio said the other caves must be explored not only for tourism but also for archeological purposes since several pottery wares and shells dating back to the Iron Age (1,000 BC-A.D. 500) had been found, particularly in the Kambulakan cave. Sometime in 1999, several earthen wares used as burial assemblage were accidentally unearthed in Kambulakan and are now displayed in the municipal hall.

A documentation made by the municipality show the distinctive decorations on the pottery. The absence of Asian and Chinese trade ware ceramics indicates that these belonged to the Iron Age.

The presence of shells called locally as "*budyong*" shows that these were cut and smoothened with the use of an iron tool during the Iron Age, it said.

The display included the skull of a hunting dog inside a human burial jar in Kambulakan.

Verna Magallon, chair of the municipal council's committee on tourism and heritage, said other caves need to be rehabilitated and roads improved.

Favorite

Valencia, 10 km from the national road, is home to 12 caves. The Silay cave draws the biggest number of visitors because of its grandiose stalactites and stalagmites, according to Ronnie Baisac, head of the spelunkers in Alegria.

It is only here that insect bats, considered the smallest species in the bat family, can be found, he said.

THE SILAY cave formation.

Reaching the mouth of Silay on top of a mountain is a breathtaking experience because of the panoramic view of the surrounding mountains. The 30-minute walk from the village proper, covering 1.3 km, to reach the cave's mouth is a good start for mountaineers, cave enthusiasts and adventure seekers, Baisac said.

Visitors are greeted by a cathedral-like dome adorned by stalactites and stalagmites as high as four meters.

The curtain wall of a stalactite, four to five meters high and six to 10 meters wide, is one of the favorites, Baisac said.

Silay also has a cave coralloid—two prominent columns formed when stalactites and stalagmites meet—and chamber-like sections that look like altars.

Several prominent local spelunkers, like the late Dr. Adolf Espina and American caver Charles Festerson, had explored the cave a year ago and were struck by its awesome beauty, Baisac said.

Alternate wartime church

Less than 100 meters from Silay is the Cambusay cave, which was used as a church and refuge of residents during World War II, he said.

Baisac, who served as the guide when the INQUIRER and members of the Philippine Air Force 505 rescue team visited the caves last week, said the Cambusay, named for its once overflowing crystalline waters, must be rehabilitated before it is opened to the public.

It has giant stalagmites forming a huge altar just a few meters from the opening.

Just 30 meters from Cambusay is the Bat cave, so called because it is the habitat of at least five species of bats, Baisac said. Since the cave has yet to be explored, Baisac said he did not how many of these bats thrive in the cave.

The Kantayong is ideal for adventure seekers because of its narrow opening. One has to rappel a few meters down to get inside.

Joseph Reynan Peque, a local spelunker, said the cave had fascinating stalactites, such as rare bosom-like formations.

Tours

With the growing attraction of the caves, the barangay council has passed a resolution banning the throwing of garbage to preserve the pristine environment, especially in areas leading to the caves, said village councilor Montana Lirada.

The resolution also bans the extraction of stalactites and stalagmites.

Lirada said the barangay was promoting the caves as tourist spots and hoped to earn from them when the local government begins its ecotourism tours next year.

"We are highly dependent on farming and when tourists start to come we are hopeful that we will be able to earn from the proceeds of the package tours and help some of the residents here. We are also willing to assist tourists in their tour here," she said.

Magallon said the local government was completing plans for packaged tours, not just to the caves but also to the the town's waterfalls, lake and dive sites.

She said she hoped that educational tours would be conducted by universities and schools so that young students would appreciate the caves and other beautiful natural spots, and learn to preserve and promote them.

Magallon said a dolphin-watching program would also be organized. Hundreds of these cetaceans, particularly the spinner and bottlenose dolphins, can be seen near the seashore.

Since Alegria is off the Tañon Strait, the seas are still abundant with marine species, including dolphins and other exotic sea mammals and corals.

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(PDI–December 15, 2007)

NPA kills man tagged in activist's slaying

LEGAZPI CITY—CALLING IT THE SERVING of "revolutionary justice," the New People's Army in Bicol on Friday claimed responsibility for the killing Wednesday in Ligao City of the bodyguard of a former Albay governor.

The victim, identified by police as Expedito Ribaya, was driving a pick-up truck and was on his way home after attending a meeting at the Bahamas Irrigators Association, of which he was president, when he was shot several times in the body.

Florante Orobia, spokesperson of the NPA in Albay, said Ribaya was one of those behind the murder of Bayan Muna provincial coordinator Rodolfo Alvarado last year.

He said Ribaya was killed in an "arrest" operation conducted by guerrillas Dec. 12.

In an e-mail press statement, Orobia said Ribaya was supposed to face trial after his arrest but since he was heavily armed, the team of rebels decided to shoot him.

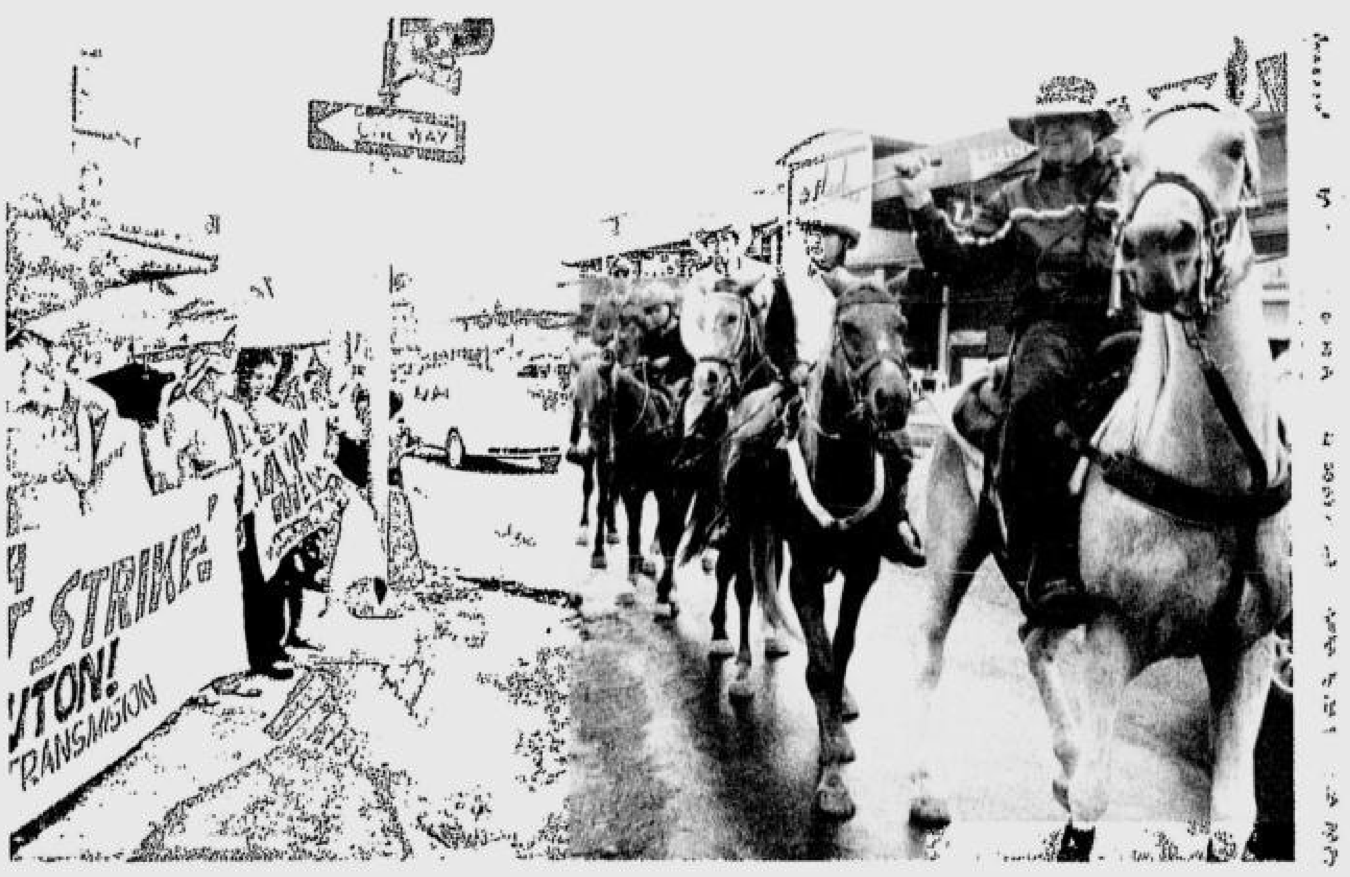
Orobia said a "deep investigation" conducted by the NPA's Santos Binamera Command proved that Ribaya directly conspired with military death squads in killing Alvarado, who was a Bayan Muna party-list nominee.

He said Ribaya served as a lookout.

Alvarado, 53, was shot by a lone gunman aboard a motorcycle on New Year's Eve last year.

Orobia said while Ribaya was one of the bodyguards of former Albay Gov. Fernando Gonzalez, he was also an active military agent.

Along with Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon, the Bicol Region is one of the areas in the country with the most extrajudicial killings from the time President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office in 2001. *Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*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TON!
TRANSMISION

SYMPATHY DENNIS JAY SANTOS/INQUIRER MINDANAO
Members of a horse club association bring their rides over to an area where drivers were to converge in Davao City during a transport strike Dec. 13 to show their support for the protest action.

Soldiers say they seized guerrilla farms

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

BASEY, SAMAR—THE MILITARY ON MONday turned over what it claimed were communist communal farms in Barangay Mabini here, but only an aging woman among the 12 landowners showed up for the event.

"We can now enjoy the produce of our land. This land is ours," said Concepcion Batica, 69, during the ceremony, led by Lt. Col. Jonathan Ponce, head of the Army's 62nd Infantry Battalion.

Ponce had earlier claimed that the communist New People's Army seized farmlots, with areas ranging from two hectares to 92 ha, from farmers in this municipality 21 years ago and converted these into communal farms.

The claim could not be independently confirmed by the INQUIRER.

Ponce said the "communal farms" were "accidentally" discovered in the villages of Mabini, Cancaiyas, Villa Aurora, Baluog and Buenavista, with a total area of 266 ha, during military operations against the rebels in September.

The farms had supplied the food of the rebels, Ponce said.

But Diana Ragub, regional coordinator of the Samahan han Gugti ng mga Paraguma ha Sinirangan Bisayas (Group of Small Farmers in Eastern Visayas), said the officer's claim was just propaganda.

"The existence of these communal farms, if there's any, does not prove anything because it's not an element of rebellion. I don't know of any communal farms in Basey. But I know that some barangays had engaged in communal farming techniques, like the *tiklos*," Ragub said.

A *tiklos* is a *bayanihan* form of farming in which farmers work in exchange for palay given to them during harvest.

Rebs shoot trooper dead in cockfight

TAGUM CITY—COMMUNIST REBELS ATtacked a village fiesta cockfight in Compostela town in Compostela Valley on Thursday, killing a soldier and wounding six civilians, the police said yesterday.

Senior Insp. Rolly Albana, Compostela police chief, said MSgt. Vergel Villacorta, of the Army's 72nd Infantry Battalion, died instantly when an undetermined number of New People's Army (NPA) rebels armed with handguns shot him inside the cockpit in Sitio (sub-village) Valma in Barangay Ngan around 3:35 p.m.

Albana said six of the spectators, who were watching the cockfight, also suffered bullet wounds due to stray bullets.

The wounded were brought to hospitals, he said.

Albana said the attack could be part of the NPA's stepped-up offensive against the government.

"It was clear that the target was MSgt. Villacorta," he said.

Assassination of government agents, he said, is the job of the NPA's Special Partisan Unit (Sparu).

On Nov. 29, suspected NPA rebels also shot and killed a village watchman in the town, who was involved in a gunfight early this year that killed two guerrillas.

Hernane Ilagan, alias Totot, 47, a resident of Barangay Ngan, was making his rounds of the public market in Compostela poblacion when attacked around 2:30 p.m. *Frinston Lim, Inquirer Mindanao*

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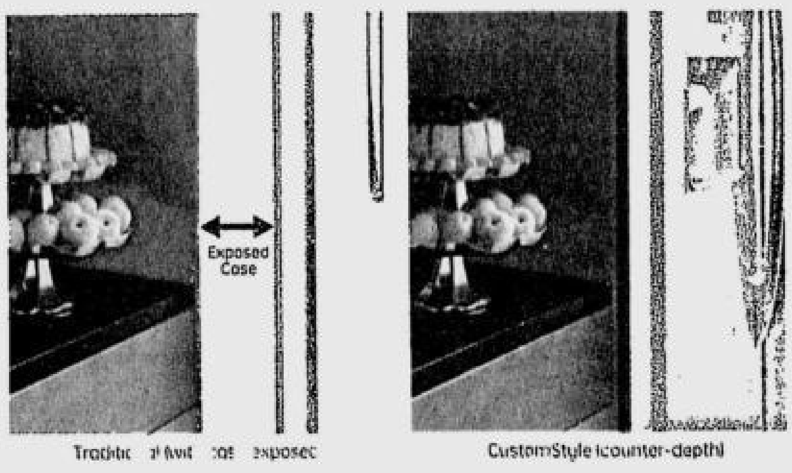

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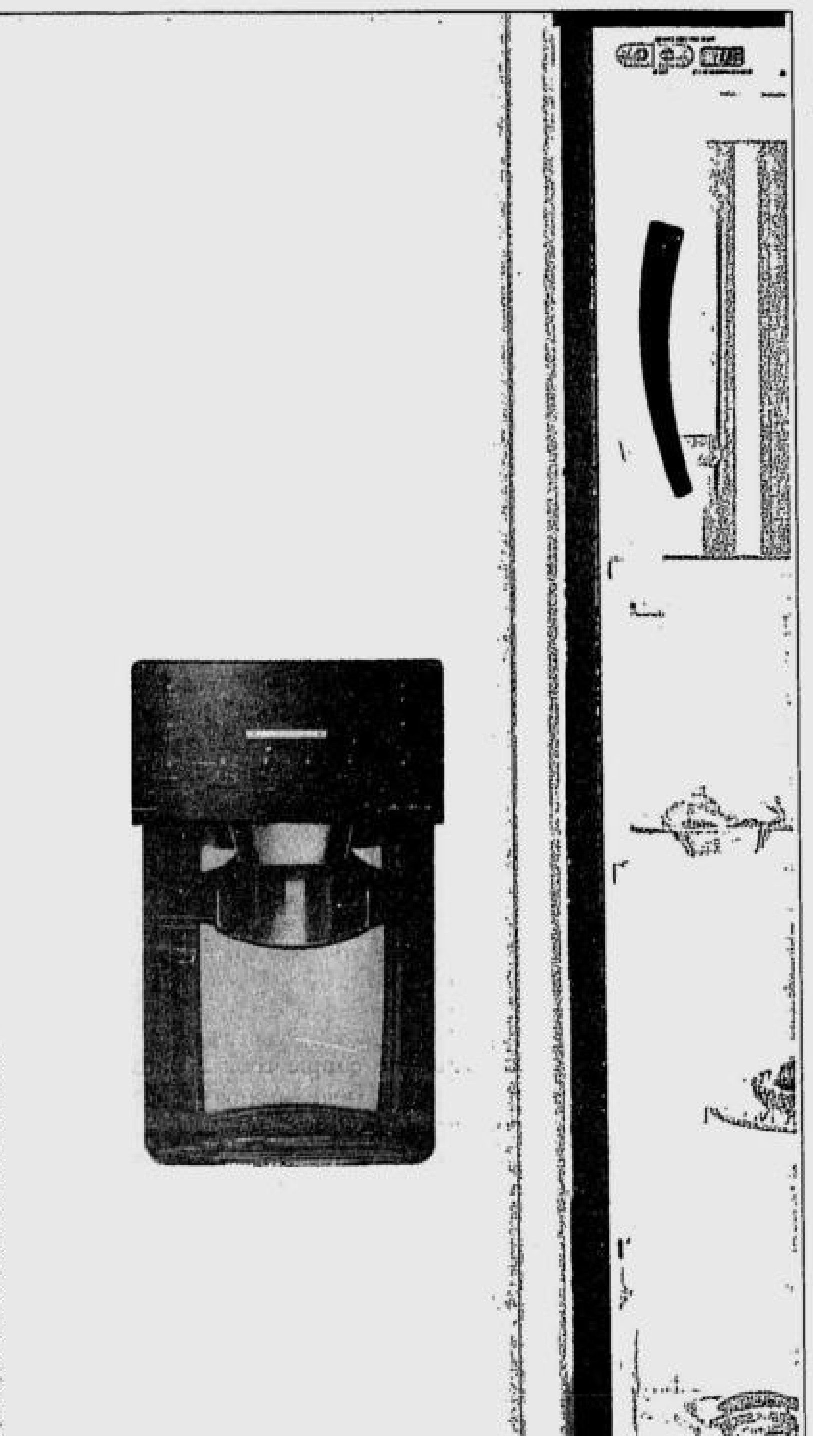

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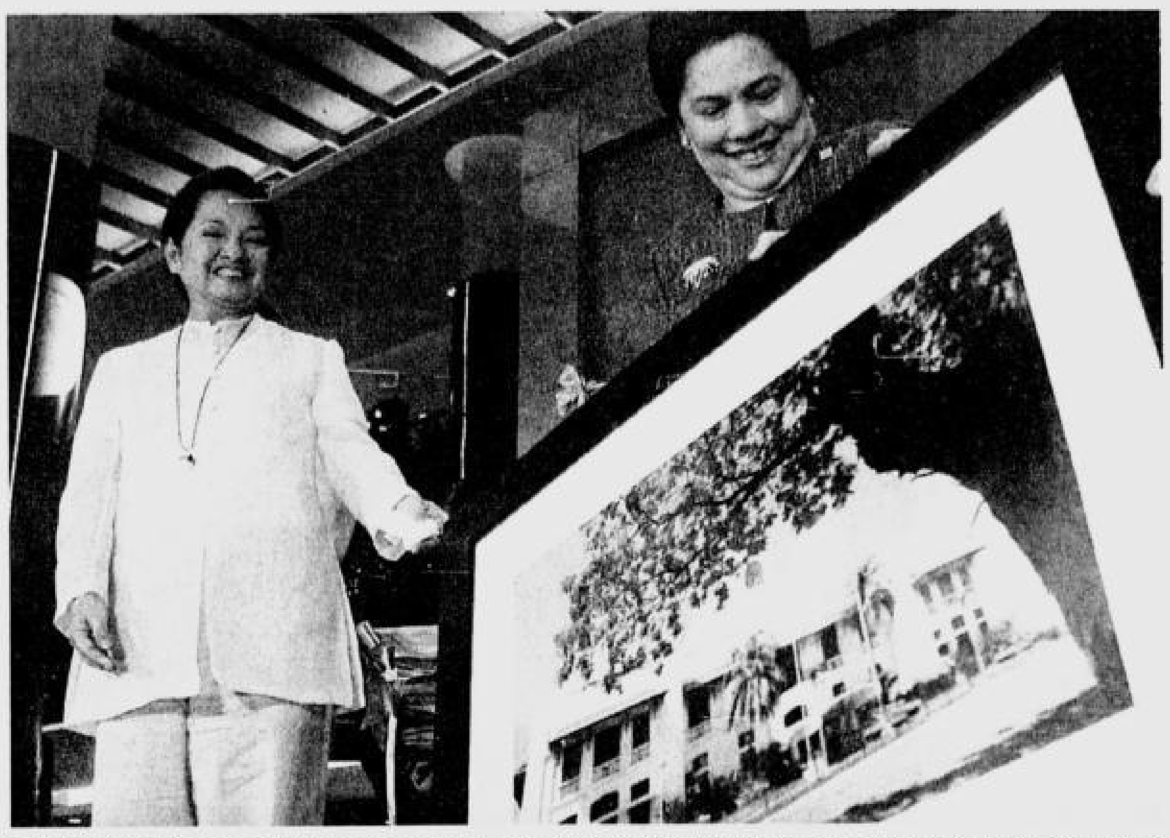
Documents unveil P200-M Asean summit scam

By Jolene R. Bulambot
Inquirer Visayas



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo receives a photo of the Malacañang sa Sugbo at the launching of the book "Cebu Pride of Place" during her visit to Cebu City. PCPO

CEBU CITY—CLOSE TO P200 million worth of road improvement works, including one in Siquijor, were inserted in the Department of Public Works and Highway's P2-billion budget for the 12th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit held in Cebu in January.

At least 16 maintenance projects for national roads, with a budget totaling P175 million, were included in the 36 items that were approved by the DPWH as projects related to the Asean summit, according to a document obtained from the legal department of the DPWH in Central Visayas.

The document showed that out of DPWH's P2-billion budget for the Asean summit, P415 million was allotted for road improvement in Metro Cebu areas that surround or were within the venues of Asean summit meetings and other activities.

But of the 36 items, several national roads, including the intermittent section of the Poo-Lazi national road in the island-province of Siquijor, were allocated funds even if these were not related to the Asean event.

Lawyer Agustinito Hermoso, regional legal officer of DPWH in Central Visayas, admitted that there were rehabilitation and improvements of national roads that were not part of the Asean venues but were included in the Asean budget.

Hermoso said this was done by the DPWH to provide funds for national roads that needed immediate maintenance.

"That was what the secretary of public works and highways (Hermogenes Ebdane) approved. We can't question the wisdom of the secretary. There were roads that were rehabilitated and improved but were not used during the Asean summit. In asking for budget, we don't ask for piecemeal but we consolidated all the needed budget for the rehabilitation and improvements of national roads in Cebu. Including it in the Asean budget is a justification so that the budget will be released immediately," Hermoso said.

The almost P2-billion budget for the summit was taken from the Motor Vehicles User's Charge (MVUC) fund.

The 16 national roads that were not actually used in the Asean summit events but were listed as Asean projects included P15 million for the Cebu Transcentral Highway; a total of P30 million for four other Cebu City streets; N. Bacalso Avenue (Bulacao to Mananga section in Talisay City), P15 million; Cebu-Toledo Wharf Road, P10 million; N. Bacalso Avenue (Boljoon section), P10 million; Santander-Barili Road (Samboan section), P10 million; Santander-Barili-Toledo Road (Moalboal section), P10 million;

Toledo-Tuburan road, P10 million; Tuburan-Tabuelan Road, P10 million; Tabuelan-San Remigio Road, P10 million; Cebu North Road (Canlagang-Lamak section), P10 million; Cebu North Road Wharf Road (Liloan-Danao section), P10 million; and the Poo-Lazi National Road, P15 million.

Hermoso admitted only some of these 36 items went through the bidding process while others were done without bidding through a special authority signed by Ebdane on June 23, 2006.

The document showed that DPWH also allocated P131 million for the rehabilitation and improvement of roads owned by local governments in the cities of Lapu-Lapu on Mactan Island and in Mandaue City.

The same list also revealed that DPWH set aside P270 million for road safety projects in the cities of Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-Lapu.

The document confirmed an earlier Commission on Audit finding that there were 136 project costing P1.5 billion that were implemented without bidding and 16 other road maintenance project, worth P168.3 million, implemented outside the venues of the Asean meetings.

The COA also found that 63 projects worth P766.7 million were implemented without appropriate funding and perfected contracts; P54.9 million of 660 sets of lampposts were found to be overpriced; and rehabilitation and repair works costing P30.3 million were implemented in private lots.

DPWH Regional Director Marlina Alvizo said in an earlier interview that the DPWH was preparing to answer the COA findings.

She denied any irregularity in the implementation of Asean-related projects saying the DPWH could justify the spending.

Ex-mayor, others charged with depleting town funds

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—A CRIMINAL complaint has been filed at the Visayas Ombudsman against the former mayor of the town of Candoni in Negros Occidental and several other local officials who allegedly conspired to deplete the town's coffers by over P4 million.

Former municipal mayor Liberty Manzano and the former acting treasurer, Analyn Rodriguez, led those who were charged on Dec. 12 at the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas by Eduardo Ladiana, a resident of the town.

Manzano did not answer repeated calls made to her cellular phone yesterday.

Ladiana included as a basis to his complaint a copy of the Commission on Audit's annual audit report for 2006, which recommended that criminal and administrative charges be filed against Rodriguez.

According to the COA report, Rodriguez incurred a cash shortage of P4,303,030, comprising of undeposited collection of P1,633,711 and unliquidated cash advances of P2,669,319, Ladiana said.

The report also said Rodriguez transferred P2,118,200 from the town's Trust Fund account to its General Fund in violation of Presidential Decree No. 1445, the Government Accounting and Auditing Manual and Republic Act No. 7160 (Local Government Code of 1991).

The transfer of the Trust Fund to the General Fund was authorized by Manzano, said the complaint.

He also said that on July 1, 2005, Candoni obtained a P10-million loan from the Land Bank of the Philippines to buy a grader from BJ Martel. However, the COA found that the grader was bought without bidding, Ladiana added.

The purchase and payment made to the supplier had no supporting documents, he added.

PARADIGM SHIFT

Nurse couple finds new life in mangoes

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

MANAOAG, PANGASINAN—FILIPINO NURSES flock to other countries to seek the proverbial greener pastures. But a couple from this town decided to stay put and found out that life could even be greener by engaging in mango business.

Lito Arenas and his wife Charito, both 51, are nurses. But right after they got married in 1980, the couple took a path far from the nursing field—mango contracting, growing and trading.

Arenas said he took up nursing because he was inspired by a sister who was a nurse and "who looked very neat in white uniform."

"But I also have an uncle who was involved in mango contracting. As a child and until I was a college student, I would go with my uncle to mango orchards and would enjoy myself immensely, especially during harvest time," he said.

Torn

Between nursing and mango business, the latter won. Arenas went into mango business.

Arenas recalled his father's advice to wisely use the P2,500 cash he and his wife received from well-wishers during their wedding day.

He used the money to grow mangoes.

Twenty seven years later, the "seed money" has multiplied a million fold and the couple is at the helm of a bustling mango processing plant and of the Pangasinan Tropical Fruit Multi Purpose Cooperative which has a membership of more than 100 mango growers in Manaoag and other towns in the Ilocos region.

It was a road paved with challenges, Arenas, now called mango king of Ilocos region, said.

While he inherited a three-hectare mango farm, he had limited knowledge on farming technologies. Thus he attended various trainings and seminars on mango production conducted by the Department of Agriculture, and joined almost every activity related to mango production.

Learning process

Arenas applied whatever technology he had learned on his farm, such as techniques to minimize the amount of pesticides and other cost-efficient technologies that helped him produce quality fruits with less expense.

He also practices mango bagging technology that ensures the export quality of his fruits.

Loan assistance from DA enabled him to lease additional mango plantations. Then he established markets for his mangoes such as the KLT Fruits, Pure and Rich, and Tres Martires; and supplied fruits to exporters to Hong Kong and Japan.

He also supplies 60 percent of the mangoes processed by Zest-O Corp.

The couple's latest venture is the dried mango processing and pickling. The Bureau of Agricultural Research and the DA Ilocos regional office provided him drying machines through a grant and a soft loan for a dried mango processing facility.

Now, he need not worry about losses due to "mango rejects" or those not acceptable for consumption as fresh fruits, as these are processed into dried mangoes.

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Cops fail to stop naked frat men who 'ran fast'

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—PICTURE this.

Pot-bellied policemen chasing naked fraternity members on an initiation run.

This was the scene that unfolded yesterday as 10 members of the Alpha Phi Omega (APO) fraternity made a run around the University of the Philippines-Los Baños (UPLB).

Behind them were policemen in uniforms. *(See related story on Page A24)*

The run lasted only two minutes, but the image of policemen in their blue uniforms gasping for breath as they ran after the naked fraternity members was good entertainment for those who witnessed it.

Messages were supposed to be painted on the bodies of the fraternity men. They were to distribute roses to women spectators along the way.

But the frat men had to forego of the messages and the roses as these would slow them down and allow the policemen to catch up.

A police official, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media, said the UPLB's Office of Student Affairs gave police orders to stop the run because the fraternity had no permit.

He said two policemen were hurt after APO seniors shoved them. "The runners' senior were ordering the neophytes to ignore us and shoved us off," he said.

He added that they were not able to stop the runners. "We couldn't stop them, they ran so fast," he said. *Niña Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Sayyaf men snatch 2 in Patikul, Sulu

ZAMBOANGA CITY—SUSPECTED ABU Sayyaf gunmen abducted two persons in Patikul, Sulu on Thursday, a town official said yesterday.

Panglima Estino Mayor Munib Estino said the bandits, numbering about 30, took two of his staffers at gunpoint from Sitio Timpuk around 9:30 a.m.

Estino identified the victims as Rolando Benitez, 40, his driver; and Edmar Molina 35, mechanic. Both are from this city.

"I was informed that the armed men were members of the ASG. Before the abduction, they flagged down 30 passenger jeeps and held the passengers. They were only released after paying P100 to P200 each," he said.

Senior Supt. Ahirum Ajirim, Sulu police director, confirmed Estino's report on the identity of the gunmen.

He said the Abu Sayyaf group responsible for the abduction was headed by a Commander Kirrih.

Estino said the bandits also commandeered his Hummer jeep, which Benitez was driving.

"I will not entertain any demand and I will not negotiate. I will make sure that those behind the abduction will pay for it dearly," he said. *Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

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More Sports stories and SEA Games updates on A27 to A32

Taufik claims badminton gold

KORAT, THAILAND—OLYMPIC CHAMPION Taufik Hidayat won gold at the Southeast Asian Games here Friday, helping Indonesia towards a clean sweep of all seven medals in the competition.

Hidayat beat Singapore's Lee Yen Hui Kendrick, 21-15, 21-9, after quickly taking control. He raced to an 8-2 lead, testing his opponent with deep shots and deft play at the net and he sealed the first game with an overhead smash.

The second game followed a similar pattern, with the Indonesian superstar rarely looking troubled.

"I'm happy because I won the gold medal for Indonesia and I'm happy with my performance," he said.

Hidayat was at the center of controversy on Wednesday when an umpire ordered him from the side of the court to the stands after he accused officials of trying to aid a Thai player. The Games have been overshadowed by claims of unfair judging by Thai officials.

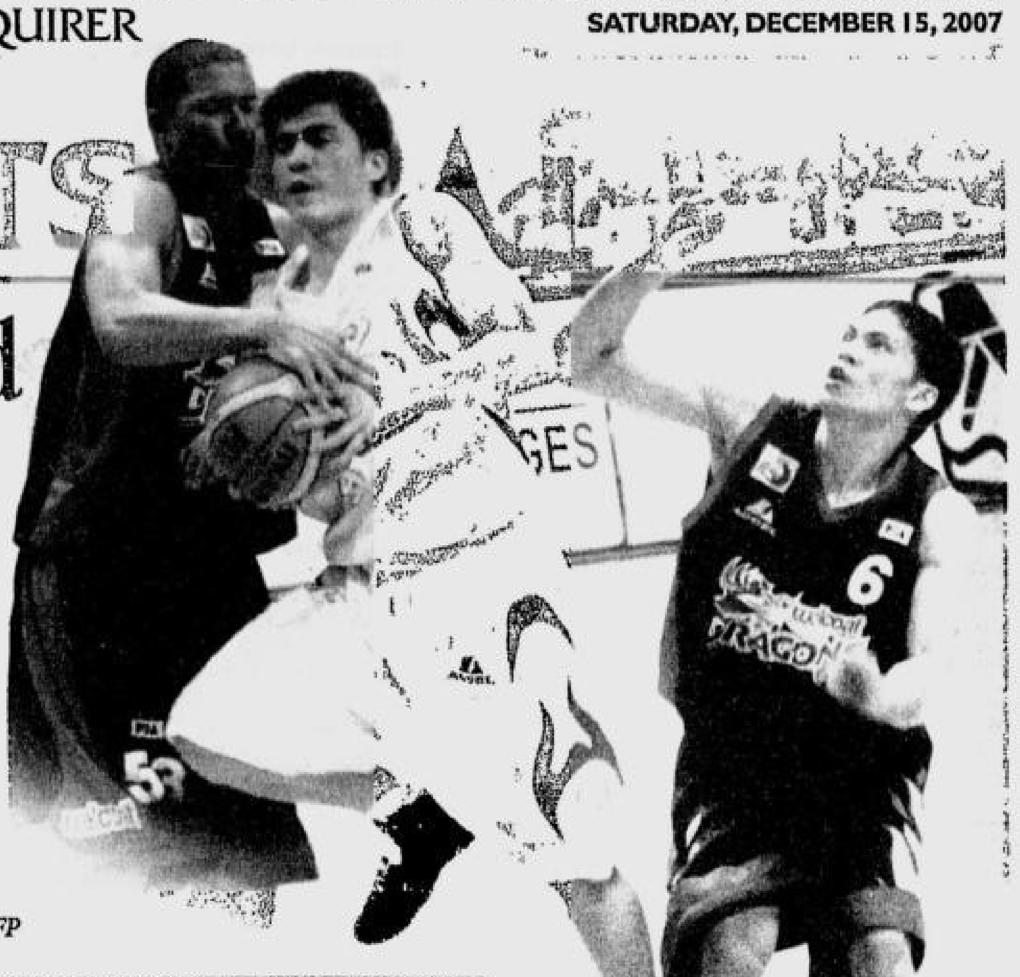
In the women's singles final, Indonesia's Maria Kristin Yulianti beat fellow Indonesian Adriyanti Firdasari 21-16, 21-15.

In the women's doubles final, Indonesian pair Natsir Liliyana and Vita Marissa beat Jo Novita and Greysia Polii, also from Indonesia, 21-15, 21-14.

In the mixed doubles final, Indonesia's Flandy Limpele and Vita Marissa beat Thailand's Sudket Prapakamol and Saralee Thoungthongkam 21-14, 21-15.

Indonesia also took the men's and women's team golds earlier in the week.

If Indonesia wins the men's doubles final Friday evening—between Markis Kido and Hendra Setiawan, and Hendra Wijaya and Hendri Kurniawan Saputra of Singapore—they will have won all seven badminton medals. *AFP*



TALK 'N TEXT spitfire Mac Cardona gets stopped in his drive by Welcoat's Joe De Vance (left) and Jireh Ibañez (right). RYAN LIM

Phone Pals; Realtors triumph

GAME TODAY
(West Negros College Gym, Bacolod City)
4:30 p.m.—Purefoods vs Air21

By June Navarro

RYAN REYES IS BECOMING A RISING property for Sta. Lucia Realty.

The third overall rookie pick fired a career-high 26 points to spark the Realtors to a convincing 104-78 triumph over Red Bull last night in the Smart-PBA Philippine Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Reyes also hauled down 10 rebounds and issued four assists for Sta. Lucia's third win in a row. His heroics also helped the Realtors break a six-game losing streak to the Bulls.

"We're glad we finally beat Red Bull," said Sta. Lucia coach Boyet Fernandez after notching their seventh victory that tied the Realtors with the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals and the Magnolia Beverage Masters at 7-6.

The Phone Pals got to that card by surviving the ejection of two key players and turning back a Welcoat rally for a 99-96 victory in the first game.

Missing chief gunner Cyrus Baguio for the third straight time, the Bulls never got close to the form that overhauled a 15-point deficit to turn back the Beverage Masters in an out-of-town match last week.

Yancy De Ocampo's putback off a Donbel Belano miss with 8.4 seconds remaining sealed the deal for the Phone Pals, giving them a 98-93 buffer that averted what could have been another monumental collapse reminiscent of their first meeting with the Dragons.

"We didn't allow the ejection of (Mac) Cardona and Harvey (Carey) to affect us," said Talk 'N Text coach Derrick Pumaren.

Cardona, who finished with a team-high 21 points, was thrown out after hitting Jojo Tangkay with a clothesline tackle with 2:21 to play. Carey followed Cardona to the showers for getting into the Cardona-Tangkay fray.

Both assessed with flagrant fouls penalty 2, Cardona and Carey could face suspension in the next Talk 'N Text game, according to PBA technical chief Perry Martinez.

The scores:

First Game

TALK 'N TEXT 99—Cardona 21, De Ocampo 17, Washington 13, Alapag 10, Ritualo 10, Allado 10, Carey 8, Aljamal 4, Ferreira 2, Peek 2, Belano 2.

WELCOAT 96—Belasco 20, De Vance 19, Tangkay 17, Arana 13, Dulay 13, Ibanes 7, Wainwright 3, Ballesteros 2, Sta Maria 2, Gelig 0, Lopez 0.

Quarters: 23-19; 47-36; 77-65; 99-96

Second Game

STA. LUCIA 104—Reyes 26, Omolon 15, Williams 14, Espino 12, Gonzales 9, Miranda 7, Aquino 7, Daa 6, Coronel 4, Yeo 4, Butel 0, Mendoza 0.

RED BULL 78—Valenzuela 14, Sharma 12, Najorda 10, Robinson 10, Cruz 9, Camaso 7, Pennisi 5, Ybanez 4, Hrabak 3, Membrere 2, Bgula 2, Andaya 0.

Quarters: 26-17; 43-38; 72-59; 104-78

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'Firms must pay for oil leak cleanup'

Muntinlupa should sue, Biazon adds

By Julie M. Aurelio and Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

MUNTINLUPA CITY REP. RUFFY BIAZON yesterday urged the two companies allegedly responsible for Sunday's oil leak to pay for the cleanup of waterways affected by the spill.

Biazon told the INQUIRER that the city government should definitely sue Universal Robina and Alaska Milk if the factories were found to be responsible for dumping at least 20 drums of foul-smelling oil into a creek flowing into the Tunasan-Cuyab River.

"They must take it upon themselves to pay for the cleanup of the river as part of their corporate social responsibility," he said.

Biazon, who spoke at a forum in Pasay City, was reacting to reports that the city government was thinking of claiming damages against the two companies. According to him, erring companies that polluted bodies of water were required by law to pay for the cleanup.

"The oil spill in Laguna de Bay is covered by the Clean Water Act that says companies are liable to shoulder the cost of cleanup," the congressman said.

On Thursday, Mayor Aldrin San Pedro said they might sue the factories for damage caused by the bunker oil.

"Those factories operate in San Pedro, Laguna, so we cannot issue a closure order against them," the mayor said. "But the Tunasan-Cuyab River is within our boundaries, we are the ones affected."

The mayor also urged the Laguna Lake Development Authority and the Philippine Coast Guard to hasten its investigation of the oil spill.

He said the Muntinlupa City council would pass a resolution asking the LLDA and the PCG to impose "stricter, drastic measures" against Universal Robina and Alaska Milk once the report is complete.

Biazon pushed for stricter implementation of local and national environmental laws to prevent another oil spill, the second incident since November.

Meanwhile, Alaska Milk Corp. vice-president for corporate affairs Santiago Polido said the company might complete the cleanup of the "oil leak" today.

Polido called it an oil leak because only "100 liters" of oil were involved.

He also said the pipe leading to a non-operating boiler in its milk manufacturing factory in Barangay Tunasan, the source of the leak, had been replaced when the leak occurred.

"We have mobilized employees under the supervision of the Philippine Coast Guard for the daily cleanup which involves picking up of debris stained by oil. The Philippine Coast Guard estimates the clean-up may be completed (today)," Polido said.

Universal Robina Corp. chief legal counsel Victoria Beltran said the Gokongwei-owned food and beverage firm passed oil and grease sampling tests conducted by the LLDA so the problem could not have come from them.

"If ever we failed, we will not back out of the responsibility of cleaning up the Tunasan river. But it's not ours," Beltran said.

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Police kill bolo-wielding hostage-taker in Pasay City

By Julie M. Aurelio

A HOSTAGE TAKER ARMED with a bolo was shot dead before dawn Friday in Pasay City.

Responding policemen shot the suspect when they sensed he was about to attack his victims.

Suspect Renato Pascual, 40, was declared dead on arrival at the Manila Sanitarium and Hospital after he was shot four times in different parts of the body.

One of the hostages, Gladys Pascual, 32, sustained a gunshot wound in the right knee as a result of the policemen's assault. The others were identified as Marnelli Licyag, 21, a boarder living at the suspect's house on 114 Humilidad Street, Pasay City; and April Javinar, 27, of 1741 Cuyegkeng St.

Case investigator PO3 Joel Landicho said that around midnight, Licyag was looking for water inside the rest room when the suspect locked her inside.

Licyag's cries for help got the attention of people outside the house, but Pascual, an overseas Filipino worker, threatened to harm the victim if somebody tried to help her.

After an hour of negotiations, Pascual demanded that Javinar and his cousin Gladys Pascual be brought to him in exchange for Licyag, prompting policemen and members of the Special Weapons and Tactics to position themselves outside.

Landicho said the suspect eventually released Licyag while the two others were locked up in the rest room.

After another hour of negotiations, Landicho said they heard cries from the two victims.

Thinking their lives were in danger, SWAT members barged into the room and shot the suspect.

Gladys is still being treated at the Manila Sanitarium and Hospital in Pasay City.

Landicho said they were able to recover a 21-inch bolo from the crime scene.

Police are still investigating the motive for the hostage-taking and are looking into reports that Pascual was under the influence of drugs during the incident.

Nude runners on UP campus call for GMA ouster

By Jeannette I. Andrade

SOME 30 FRATERNITY MEMbers continued yesterday a yearly tradition by running naked from Palma Hall at the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City to gleeful shrieks and yells from spectators.

It was the Alpha Phi Omega (APO) fraternity's 30th annual Oblation Run *(See related story on page A21)*.

Covering their faces with colorful ski and yuletide masks, APO members streaked through the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy holding placards of the Student Alliance for the Advancement of Democratic Rights-UP (STAND-UP) that called for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Other placards denounced government corruption, protested enforced disappearances, sought more state subsidy for education, and the suspension of tuition increase.

Before the start of the run at around 12 p.m., some 2,000 students and onlookers armed with cameras and cellular phones had already lined the street across Palma Hall and the rest of the runners' route. The annual event is named after the Oblation, a bronze sculpture of a naked man outside Quezon Hall, the university's administration building.

Some of the onlookers sang "Here come the birds," as the runners approached. The runners' cry for the ouster of the President was drowned out by screams and shrieks.

Kevin Roldan, a UP College of Law graduate and member of the APO, said this year, the runners were calling on all UP graduates and students to do their bit for the country. "This school molded us to do something great for the country," Roldan said.

He added that if the President could not do anything to stop corruption and other issues hounding the administration, "we can do something about it."

Roldan said the run started in 1977 to protest the banning of the movie, "Hubad na Bayani," which depicted human rights abuses in the martial law era.

The event became an annual protest action, usually held on Dec. 16. This year the run was held earlier because Dec. 16 falls on a Sunday.

THE APO fraternity's traditional Oblation Run drew the usual crowd of amused spectators to the UP Diliman campus in Quezon City yesterday.

JOAN BONDOC

Manila Oceanarium opening moved to February

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE COUNTRY'S FIRST OCEAnarium has delayed its opening to the first week of February to finish the construction of additional attractions like a glass-bottom boat ride.

"We want to finish all our new attractions before opening the ocean park to the public," said park marketing manager Tina Santos.

Among the new activities, according to Santos, would be the glass-bottom boat ride on top of the Buhay na Karagatan section, which has a 25-meter walkway with curved acrylic walls to show corals, small fishes, sharks and rays.

"With the glass-bottom boat, visitors could observe the interactions among marine species from a different point of view," Santos said.

The boat that could accommodate 10 people would be manually pulled from one end of the aquarium to the other so as not to disturb the fishes.

"Patrons could interact with resident biologists and ask questions about the ecosystem during the boat ride," Santos said.

As to accusations by animal rights groups such as the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals that the ocean park "only keeps animals in captivity and away from their homes," Santos said they were serving as custodians of the Philippines' vast marine resource.

"It is a largely unknown fact that the Philippines forms 70 percent of the global epicenter of marine biodiversity, known as the Coral Triangle," she said.

"Apart from giving Filipinos the opportunity to learn more about its own riches, the Manila Ocean Park also sends a strong message to the public to help protect and conserve this heritage that the country has been blessed with, " she added.

The park will integrate sustainability factors in its initiatives, such as information, education and communications campaign; science research programs, resource management programs, and day-to-day operations.

Manila Ocean Park also embarked on a science research program on the development of a technology for coral propagation and reef rehabilitation in cooperation with Professor Benjamin Vallejo of the University of the Philippines.

Why journalists do lunch with news sources

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

BECAUSE OF ITS ABSURDITY, I still can't get over the ruling of the Court of Appeals affirming a lower court's decision convicting Jeff Quesada, a complete paralytic, of rape.

Reading the decision, I could sense that the woman justice who penned it was angry. Very, very angry.

Her anger for Jeff, whom she hasn't even seen in person, clouded her jugdment.

The decision quoted lengthily from jurisprudence that says positive identification prevails over denial.

Following that line of reasoning, everyone who is accused of rape and who denies it should be found guilty.

Whatever happened to that constitutional presumption of innocence in criminal cases?

The decision also quotes antique court rulings that say a Filipino woman who denounces a man who alleged rape must be telling the truth because she is exposing herself to public ridicule in doing so.

What an antiquated and prosaic way of finding an innocent man guilty!

The woman justice seemed more interested in finding Jeff guilty than in discovering the truth.

The woman magistrate was probably affected by my quarrel with a very influential person who recommended her or the position.

She was not even a judge in the lower court when she was appointed to the exalted position, unlike her colleagues who have had extensive experience as magistrates.

You will know more about this justice in subsequent columns.

* * *

I received an e-mail message from Andy Paliguiran who reacted to my column item about the Sumilao farmers (see On Target column titled "Sumilao farmers' plaint: The bigger picture," Dec. 13, 2007 on page A-18).

Paliguiran's message in toto:

"I beg to disagree with you on this Mon. To listen to (Ramon) Ang (SMC president) over dinner is something the ordinary individual cannot comprehend. A journalist or media man, who is covering a scoop or complaint, meeting a representative of a company over dinner invites doubts from the public."

Thank you for your comments, Andy.

But you forget that the dinner I had with Ramon Ang took place three years ago, long before the current controversy.

It was no doubt the Sumilao farmers as the controversy was far from the minds of these farmers then.

In fact, most of the farmers now taking part in the protest were praising the SMC plan to set up an agro-industrial estate in Sumilao, as Ang said in his reply to the column of Fr. Joaquin Bernas.

The dinner I had with Ramon Ang three years ago was a get-together that this columnist holds from time to time with friends, acquaintances and newsmakers.

In such dinner or lunch meetings or talks over cups of coffee or bottles of beer, I'm able to get tidbits of information for future use in my columns in the INQUIRER and Bandera.

To keep themselves abreast with inside information on current and potential future issues, journalists meet with news sources and important personalities, like Ramon Ang, for possible material in their news stories or columns.

Without those dinner or lunch meetings or talks over cups of coffee or bottles of beer with his news sources, a journalist or columnist won't be able to provide good background in his stories or columns.

METROBRIEFS

Man climbs billboard

A 59-YEAR-old former seaman scaled a hundred-foot billboard in Quezon City yesterday morning, threatening to jump off unless President Macapagal-Arroyo spoke to him. Pantaleon Vargas of Lot 24, Block 159, Paliparan Site in Dasmarinas, Cavite claimed he was driven to climb the billboard because an overseas employment agency allegedly gypped him of his hard-earned money. It took Monsignor Roberto Olaguer, the National Bilibid Prisons chaplain, to bring him down. Police said Vargas climbed the billboard atop the Paramount building at the corner of Edsa and West Avenue at around 7:30 a.m. and stayed there for close to 3 hours. He was brought to the Quezon City General Hospital and where doctors checked him for possible injuries before he was brought to QCPD Station 2. Vargas has been charged with alarm and scandal in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office. ***Jeannette I. Andrade***

6 hurt in Parañaque blast

SIX CUSTOMERS of a restaurant-bar in Paranaque City were injured when unidentified suspects hurled a grenade at them before dawn on Friday. Police are still trying to determine the identities and motive of the two suspects who alighted from a black Nissan Exalta and a Toyota Corolla 1996 model and flung the explosive at the establishment.The victims were Angelo Bautista, Ma. Catherine Escueta, Jaime dela Cruz, Mark Anthony Dimaano, Juan Paolo Cartagen and Earl Patrick Diaz. Rolando Patilla, a waiter at the Rewind Music Lounge and Resto Bar along Dona Soledad Avenue, Barangay Don Bosco also reportedly sustained shrapnel wounds. ***Julie M. Aurelio***

CEU Education's 100th Christmas

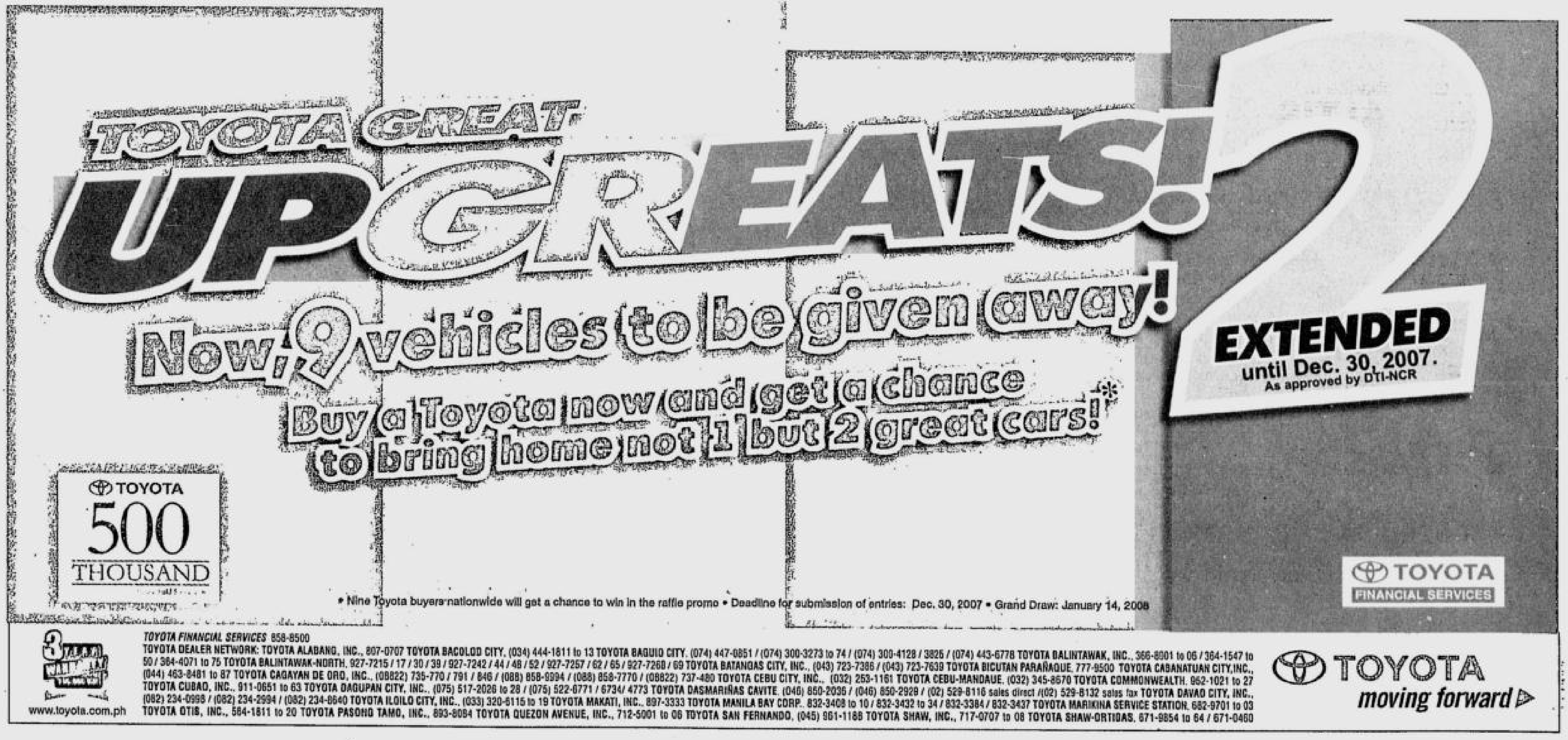
CENTRO ESCOLAR University is calling all alumni of CEU Education to join the celebration of its 100th Christmas. CEU, which turned 100 years old on June 3, celebrates its 100th Christmas at the CEU North Quadrangle starting at 4 p.m. today. Centennial jubilarians will be honored during the grand event to be led by CEU president Ma. Cristina Padolina, who will deliver the homecoming address. A major highlight of the event is the launching of the CEU Centennial coffee table book created by the CEU centennial committee led by Dr. Rosita Navarro, with Dr. Paz I. Lucido, president of the CEU Alumni Foundation as project director. For details, call Dr. Rosita Navarro, 735-9662; 7356861; 736-8551 to 54 local 204.

Pmmrai party tonight

THE PANGANIBAN Metro Manila Residents Association Inc. (Pmmrai), of Panganiban, Catanduanes, invites Panganibanons and Bicolanos alike to its annual Christmas party at 7 tonight at Jade Valley, Sct. Torillo St., Timog Avenue, Quezon City. Catanduanes Rep. Joseph Santiago is the special guest. Interested parties may call Jerry at 0919-8211342.

L. Araracap Sr., 68

Luis S. Araracap Sr. passed on last Dec. 10 and lies in state at Funeraria Oro, Sampaloc, Manila. He will be buried at the Loyola Marikina Park tomorrow after the 12:30 p.m. Mass at San Roque Parish Church. He is survived by wife Catalina and children Salome, Odilon, Luis Jr., Lulina, Alma, Estela and Jocelyn.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E-mails show Nasa's spin in astronaut attack

NASA OFFICIALS SCRAMBLED this year to decide how to handle the legal and public relations fallout surrounding Capt. Lisa M. Nowak, an astronaut who drove from Texas to Florida to confront a romantic rival, according to e-mail messages released on Wednesday by the space agency.

The 222 pages of messages also suggested a friendly relationship between Nowak and Cmdr. William A. Oefelein of the Navy days before Nowak drove to Orlando, where, the authorities say, she sprayed her rival, Capt. Colleen Shipman of the Air Force, in the face with pepper spray.

Shipman, who had been dating Oefelein, arrived at the Orlando airport after visiting him in Houston.

After Nowak's arrest, Col. Steven W. Lindsey of the Air Force, chief of the astronaut corps, flew to Florida and initially spoke on behalf of the agency. Many of the e-mail messages to Lindsey included kudos, others offered tactical suggestions which "might get it out of the media circus."

The messages were posted online by Nasa in response to Freedom of Information Act requests from many news organizations, including The New York Times.

The messages between Nowak and Oefelein were professional and warm, with a hint of flirtation. The messages reflect the banter of friendly colleagues, with her offering to pick up lunch for him and planning get-togethers for running and bike rides.

Meanwhile, Oefelein's relationship with Shipman was developing. In late January, Oefelein invited her on a trip his shuttle crew was taking to his home state, Alaska, and said he had been asked about her clothing size for Arctic gear. "I think I can figure that out," he wrote. "Sized sexy and athletic."

The private messages form an incomplete picture of the intertwined lives of the two astronauts, because Nasa did not include messages deemed purely personal.

Nowak's lawyer, Donald A. Lykkebak, said through a spokesperson that the messages were "deceptively incomplete" and had "little if anything to do with Lisa Nowak's case."

Nowak and Oefelein have been dropped from the astronaut corps and have returned to duties with the Navy. Her trial on charges of assault and attempted kidnapping is to begin in April. *NYT*

NASA astronaut Lisa Marie Nowak is shown at left in a March 2005 photo provided by Nasa, and at right in a February photo provided by the Orange County, Fla. Sheriff's Department. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Lebanon bids farewell to slain general

HARISA, Lebanon—Schools and businesses closed Friday as Lebanese people and the military staged a momentous farewell to a top general slain in a car bombing two days ago. In pouring rain, the casket of Maj. Gen. Francois Hajj was taken from the military hospital to his house in suburban Baabda, minutes away from where a car bomb incinerated his vehicle Wednesday, killing him and his driver. Hajj, who headed military operations and was next in line to become the country's army chief, held the rank of brigadier general but he was promoted to rank of major general after his death. Away from the shock and tears, an investigation into Hajj's assassination continued. In the southern city of Sidon, security agents detained Wednesday four Lebanese in whose names the car used in the bombing was registered, a security official said. Authorities were also looking into the possible involvement of al-Qaida-inspired extremists seeking vengeance against Hajj, who had led a major offensive against Islamic militants last summer. ***AP***

UK Army loses a 'batallion a year' to drugs

LONDON—The British army is losing the equivalent of nearly a battalion to illegal drug use every year, research released Friday said. Research from the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), a defense think tank, showed the losses are greater than the total number of fatalities and serious injuries resulting from Britain's involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. An article in RUSI's journal showed an increase in positive test results for illegal substances, through the defense ministry's compulsory testing (CDT) program, from 517 cases in 2003 to 769 last year—almost a battalion's worth. ***AFP***

Nearly 95 percent of e-mail said to be junk

SAN FRANCISCO—Nearly 95 percent of the e-mail sent in 2007 has been "spam," junk advertising loathed by its recipients, according to a report released Wednesday by a US Web security firm. The amount of junk e-mail has skyrocketed despite a 2004 US CAN-SPAM Act that placed restrictions on sending unwanted messages and sanctioned penalties for "spammers," according to California-based Barracuda Networks Inc. Junk messages made up an estimated 70 percent of e-mail the year the act was passed, the Barracuda report indicates. "The spam war is a continuous battle between spammers and security vendors," said Barracuda chief executive Dean Drako. "Security vendors now require 24-by-7 defense operations to continuously monitor the Internet for new spam trends and distribute new defensive solutions immediately." Barracuda said it based its findings on analysis of more than a billion e-mail messages received daily by its approximately 50,000 customers worldwide. Spammers cunningly hide their identities by routing e-mails through other people's websites, blogs or computers, according to Barracuda. ***AFP***

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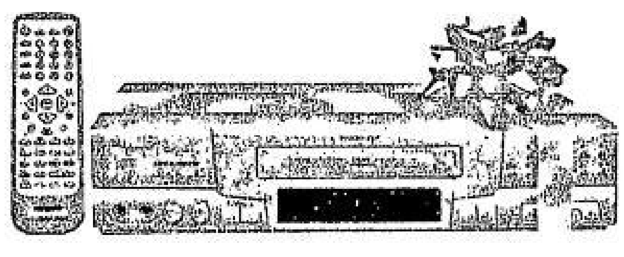

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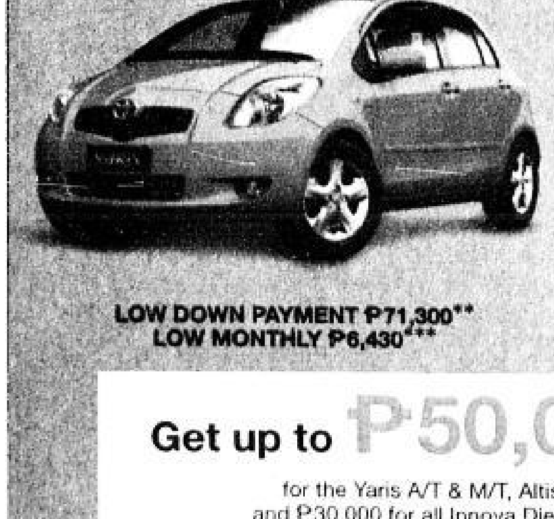

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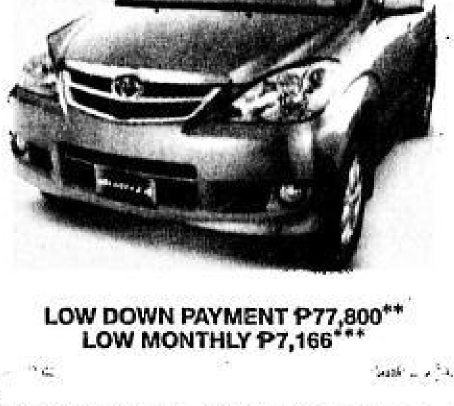

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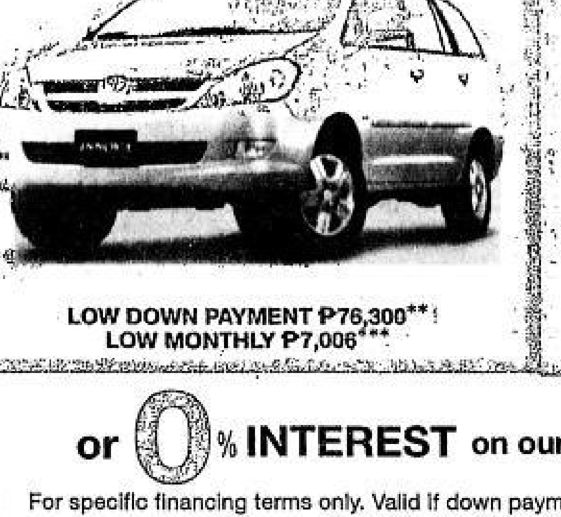

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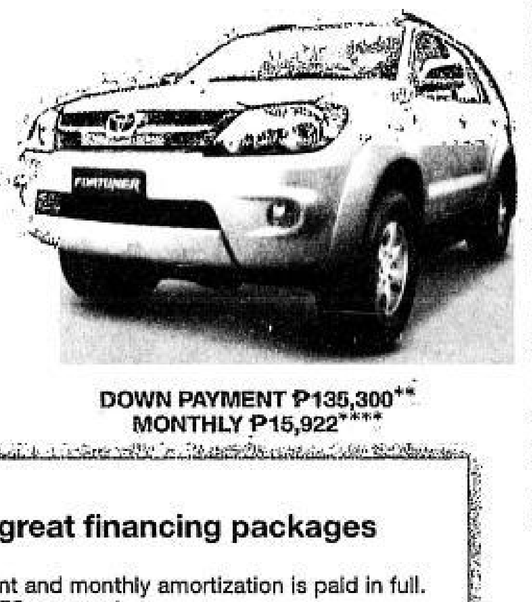

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See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5640 Series of 2007.

TOYOTA

EU leaders sign landmark reform treaty

LISBON—LEADERS OF THE 27-NATION European Union signed a landmark treaty Thursday to revitalize EU decision-making, but the show of unity was marred by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's absence from the ceremony.

"History will remember this day as a day when new paths of hope were opened to the European ideal," Portuguese Prime Minister Jose Socrates said at the grand ceremony in a historic Lisbon monastery.

The Treaty of Lisbon must yet be ratified individually by member states before it can come into effect, as planned, in 2009.

It was painstakingly drawn up to replace the EU's original constitution which was scuppered by French and Dutch "no" votes at referendums in 2005.

Like the rejected constitution, the treaty proposes a new president's post—a figurehead to replace the current cumbersome six-month rotating presidency system—and a European foreign policy supremo.

It cuts the size of the European Parliament and the number of EU decisions which require unanimous support, hence reducing national vetoes.

It also includes a European charter of fundamental human and legal rights, which Britain and Poland have refused to make binding.

However, it drops all references to an EU flag or anthem, which had fanned eurosceptic fears of another step toward a federal Europe.

Brown's failure to sign the treaty with the other leaders—a week after he boycotted an EU-Africa summit—led to new accusations that Britain is too lukewarm toward Europe.

The British PM, who attended a parliamentary committee hearing in London in the morning, eventually arrived at the official lunch venue after most of the other leaders had left.

He swiftly inked the 250-page text, which has been widely criticized in Britain as handing more powers over to Brussels, and was whisked away without commenting to reporters.

Later, after talks with Socrates, he praised Portugal's efforts in shepherding the treaty to the signing stage but refused to comment on his own absence at the official ceremony.

However, French President Nicolas Sarkozy did comment.

"We've all got problems to deal with. I personally think that we need Britain in Europe," he said after the signing ceremony at Lisbon's historic Jeronimos Monastery.

"We need Gordon," he added in English, after British Foreign Minister David Miliband represented his country at the signing along with the other 26 nations' heads of state or government. *AFP*

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WHAT'S INSIDE

▨ **Mamiit the** magnificent destroys Thai for gold / A28

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▨ **Wizards** thwart Heat; Lakers trip Spurs / A36

RP tumbles to sixth on lone Mamiit gold

Tennis ace gets revenge, clobbers Udomchoke

Nestle MILO
The Official Energy Drink of the Philippine Team
24th SEA GAMES 6-15 DECEMBER 2007 NAKHON RATCHASIMA THAILAND

SEA GAMES Medal Tally

COUNTRY	G	S	B
Thailand	173	116	101
Vietnam	65	56	82
Malaysia	64	49	89
Indonesia	54	62	82
Singapore	43	42	41
Philippines	40	89	95
Myanmar	14	25	45
Laos	5	7	31
Cambodia	2	5	10
Brunei	1	1	4
Timor Leste	0	0	0

CECIL Mamiit hits a forehand against Thailand's Danai Udomchoke in Friday's singles final at the Nakhon Ratchasima stadium. RAFFY LERMA

By Ernesto A. Gonzales
Sports Features Editor

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—ONLY tennis star Cecil Mamiit shone on a disastrous penultimate day that left the Philippine campaign in shambles at the 24th Southeast Asian Games here on Friday.

24th SEA GAMES
6 - 15 DECEMBER 2007
NAKHON RATCHASIMA
THAILAND

The 31-year-old Fil-Am retained his men's singles title with a vengeful 6-3, 6-0 rout of Thailand ace Danai Udomchoke and then combined with Eric Taino to reach the men's doubles final set Saturday.

But no one could match Mamiit's explosive show, and getting no lift from the avalanche of 16 silver medals, the overall champion of the SEAG two years ago in Manila found itself hopelessly in sixth place with 40 golds.

Malaysia surprised everyone by overhauling Vietnam for second place by a gold, 65-64, even as Thailand raised its dizzying golden total to 173 with only four events left before the Games' pass into history later Saturday.

Indonesia went on to take fourth place with 53 golds while Singapore moved away from the Filipinos by three victories.

Lee Van Corteza lost the men's 9-ball title, the baseball squad yielded its gold to Thailand and the traditional boat racers in the 10-crew 500-meter category were humbled by their rivals from Burma (Myanmar) at the MAB Prachan Reservoir in Pattaya.

While bowling ended its medal drought through a mixed doubles silver by Biboy Rivera and Liza del Rosario, the men's divers couldn't come up with a gold in three events, and taekwondo got shut out to finish with only one victory after winning six in Manila.

"We prepared hard, the athletes were well-focused but Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore prepared harder," said Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez, who rejoined the RP delegation late Thursday.

He had earlier deplored the decision of the boxing team to abandon the fight and settle for silver medals instead of filing a protest over what it felt was biased officiating in the ring.

Mamiit—who is also in the mixed doubles finals with Denise Dy—and Taino blasted Vietnam's Mihn Quan Do and Quoc Khan Le, 6-3, 7-5, to gain a shot at the gold against the Ratiwatana twins of Thailand.

The two Fil-Americans, the doubles bronze medalist in the Asiad last year, lost to the Ratiwatanas in the deciding match of the RP-Thailand semifinals early this week.

RP TUMBLES/ A28

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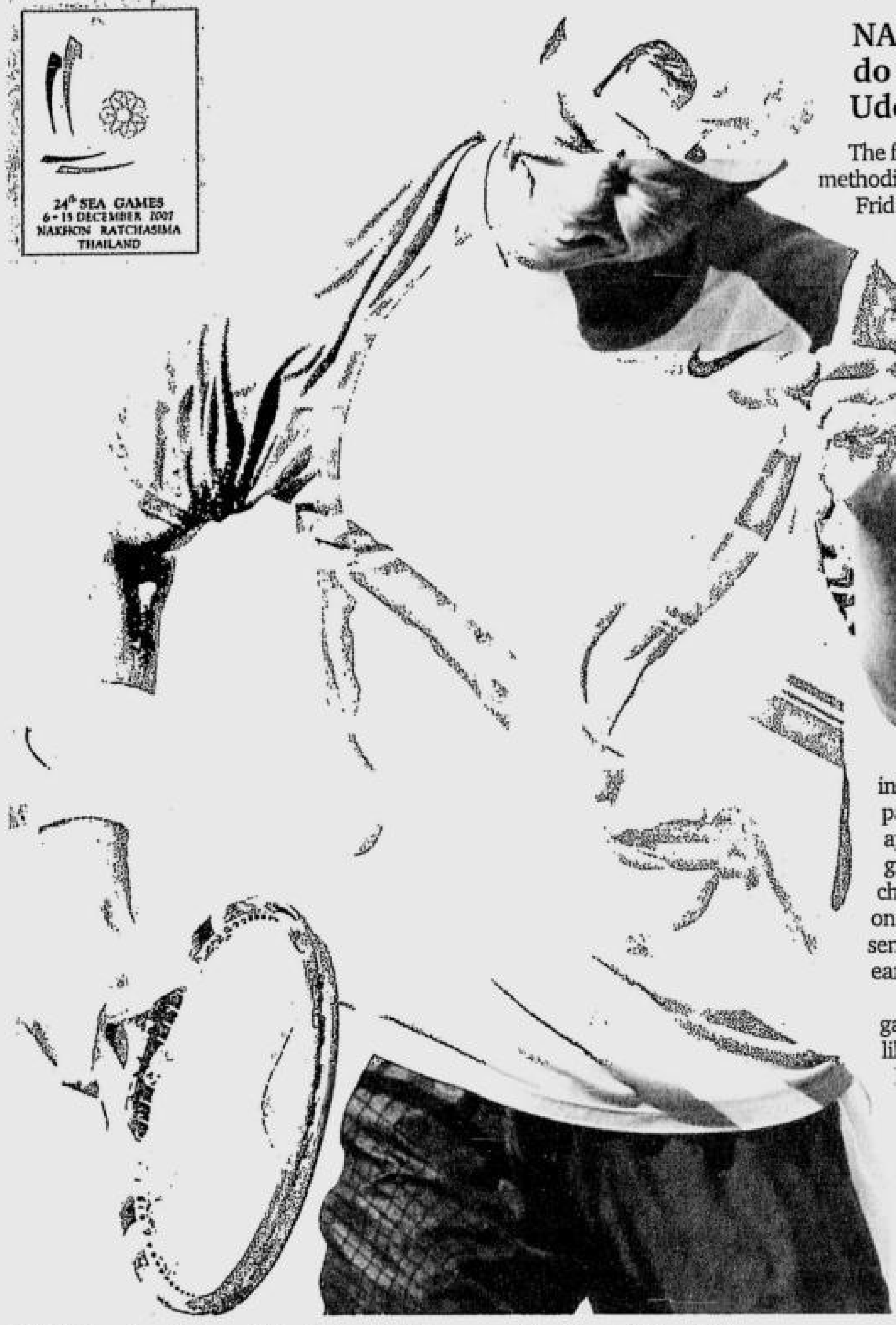
Mamiit the magnificent destroys Thai for gold

By Musong R. Castillo



CECIL Mamiit celebrates his gold-medal victory over Thai Danai Udomchoke. AFP

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—CECIL MAMIIT DID NOT do the jig this time, he just took care of Danai Udomchoke.

The flamboyant Filipino-American methodically tore the Thai ace apart Friday morning for a 6-3, 6-0 victory that hushed a partisan crowd and gave Mamiit a repeat men's singles gold medal in tennis at the Southeast Asian Games here.

Mamiit sprayed deep crosscourt shots against Udomchoke at His Majesty the King's 80th Birth Anniversary center court to prevail in one hour and 20 minutes for tennis' first gold.

It turned out to be the RP delegation's only bright moment for the day.

The 31-year-old international campaigner whose parents are originally from Sariaya, Quezon, and Alaminos, Laguna, exacted revenge on Udomchoke, who beat him in the second singles of the RP-Thailand semifinal team tie won by the hosts early in the week.

And Mamiit did it in front of a gallery that didn't embrace him like a danceful demigod in Manila two years ago.

He didn't do the jig at any time in the match, instead playing with supreme focus in a truly dominating performance.

Mamiit, who never yielded a single set on the way to the gold-medal match, served six aces and had 18 winners against the erratic Udomchoke, who committed 36 unforced errors.

"Winning (the gold medal) for the second time is more meaningful," Mamiit, cheered on by his mother and aunt in the gallery, said. "The first time (in Manila) was nerve-wracking. This is very special because it will reflect on all the Filipino athletes who are here."

The match went to serve in the first seven games of the first set until Mamiit broke the Thai, ranked second in his country behind Paradorn Srichapan, at 30 with a passing shot to move up, 5-3.

Needed momentum

That momentum was all the Filipino needed as he also broke the spirit of Udomchoke, who claimed to be hurting from foot blisters and without that much desire to win the singles gold.

"The most important thing is the team (gold)," Udomchoke said in good English. "That's because it was the first time that I was the leader of the team and I was able to lead the team to the win."

Mamiit had a tougher time later, teaming up with Eric Taino in a 6-3, 7-5 victory over Vietnam's Mihn Quan Do and Quoc Khanh Le to barge into the men's doubles finals opposite the Ratiwatana twins of Thailand.

That victory gave the RP tennis squad a chance to approximate its three-gold output in the 2005 Manila Games.

The mixed doubles team of Mamiit and Denise Dy will also play for gold on Saturday against Thais Sanchai Ratawatana and Napaporn Tongsalee.

Mamiit and Dy took out the other Thai squad of Sonchat Ratiwatana and sentimental favorite Tamarine Tanasugarn, 6-4, 6-0, in the semifinals on Friday.

The Thai twins are the heavy favorite for the gold after overpowering Mamiit and Taino in the team event, 6-4, 6-2.

Fil-Ams ready to answer call of duty

By Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—VICKI BRICK and Melissa Jacob, two Fil-Americans in the women's basketball team, did their last-minute shopping on Friday before boarding the 4 p.m. flight back to Manila.

Both echoed their great experience playing for the RP squad that still ended up without the gold medal after taking lopsided defeats in their last two outings.

Brick, a comely, athletic point guard, said she would go back to the United States after a couple of days in Manila.

Jacob is also set to fly back to the US but has plans of coming back to Manila. "If our services are needed by the country we'll be available anytime," she said.

* * *

When officials of the Thailand Sports Association hosted a launch for the Philippine delegation at the 24th Southeast Asian Games and told everyone they would take care of the Filipinos here, they weren't kidding.

Retired Col. Salvador "Buddy" Andrada knew about this first-hand.

Suffering shortness of breath and an irregular heartbeat, Andrada was confined for two days in an intensive care unit of the modern Bangkok Hospital.

The Thailand Sports Authority is footing the bill, with Chaiyapak Sirawat, one of the ost influential sports officials here, giving the assurance to his Filipino friend, the former head of the Philippine Tennis Association.

* * *

Filipinos also took good care of Filipinos inside the Athletes Village, with a 15-man team from the Philippine Center for Sports Medicine, led by Dr. Randy Molo, physical therapist Rhoy Lazaro and masseur Benjie Hizon, stationed there.

The team's biggest achievement in these Games was when it treated Annie Albania, who suffered a misaligned rib cage in her first bout. Two days of therapy helped her back into the boxing ring. She eventually won RP's only gold in the controversy-wracked boxing competitions.

A chiropractor, the esteemed Dr. Martin Camara, has also done wonders for the RP delegation, treating athletes, officials and mediamen alike as the rigors of this sporting conclave have taken its toll on almost everyone.

RP tumbles to sixth overall on lone tennis victory

From page A27

The Mamiit-Dy tandem will take on Sanchai Ratiwatana and Napaporn Tongsalee, Thailand's second-seeded team, for the gold, also Saturday.

Indonesian Ricky Yang, who beat Asian Games gold medalist Antonio Gabica in the semifinals, went all the way at the expense of Corteza, 11-8.

With ace hurler Krissada Heebthong limiting the Filipinos to nine hits in a no-relief performance, the Thais duplicated their Asiad conquest of the RP sluggers, 5-4, to clinch the gold at the Queen Sirikit University Sports Center in Bangkok.

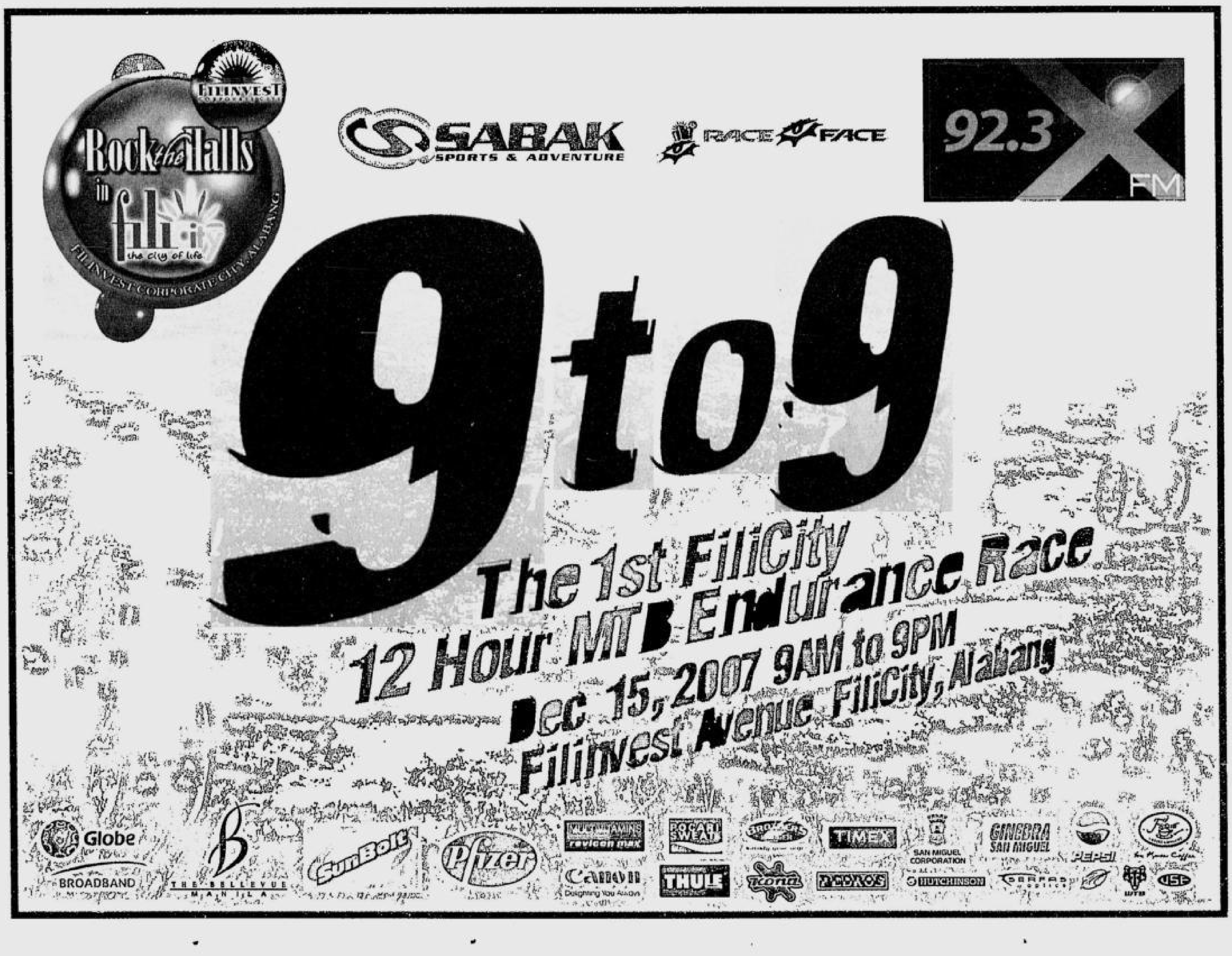
The unexpected loss came in the same city where the bowlers avoided a medal shutout as Rivera and Del Rosario rolled 2388 to grab second place behind the 2403 of the Malaysia I combination of Zul Marzan Zulkifli and Shalin Zulkifli.

The diving silvers came from Zardo Domenios in the 1-meter springboard, Roxel Fabriga in the 10m platform and the men's synchronized team of Domenios and Nino Carog.

Also landing second were Loraine Catalan in women's taekwondo's under 51 kg, judo's Tomohiko Hoshina (over 100 kg), karate-do's Irineo Toribio (under 60 kg), and sailing's Renerick Moreno (formula windsurfing), German Paz (Olympic RSX), the Farr Platu 25 team.

Gabica went on to finish third in the 9-ball singles along with taekwondo's Carlos Padilla (men's 58 kg) and Kathleen Alora (women's under 47 kg), the women's doubles team of Dy and Diane Matias, sailor Garlord Coveta (mistral) and judo's Ruth Dugaduga (under 78 kg) and Erika Joy Ponciano (over 78 kg).

Parley Tupaz and Rhovyl Verayo bowed to the Indon pair of Andy Ardiyansah and Koko Darcuncuro but has a chance to salvage a bronze in men's beach volleyball Saturday.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Loren lauds Pinoy athletes' gritty stand

SENATOR LOREN Legarda yesterday lauded the valiant efforts of Filipino athletes in the SEA Games.

"Our athletes are making us proud in the Games," said Legarda, author of a bill seeking to establish a Philippine Sports Authority. "Let us rally behind them."

Legarda took special mention of the gallant stand put up by the daughter of former Sen. Rene Saguisag, Caissa, who competed in the balanced beam despite a knee injury and the recent vehicular accident that killed her mother Dulce and critically injured her father, the former Sen. Rene Saguisag.

Legarda said although the Philippines had slipped to fifth place with just one more day left in the SEAG, the Filipino athletes showed their big fighting heart.

"Sports is not all about winning," the senator said. "It is also how the human spirit conquers barriers."

Legarda said the PSA bill will consolidate all efforts, provide direction and encourage investments in Philippine sports.

Filipinos a big flop in baseball, too

By Ernesto A. Gonzales

24th SEA GAMES
6 - 15 DECEMBER 2007
NAKHON RATCHASIMA
THAILAND

BANGKOK—BASEBALL, THE CHIEF HOPE for a gold medal from among nine sports here on Friday, turned out to be a big disappointment, too.

Included only at the last minute in the close to 600-member Philippine delegation here, the RP sluggers lost their Southeast Asian Games championship through a 5-4 decision from Thailand in their winner-take-all showdown at the Queen Sirikit Sports Center.

The Thais, who also beat the Filipinos in their last meeting in the Asian Games in Doha last year, 8-1, took an early 4-0 lead after three innings and then survived a desperate rally by the defending champions in the last frame.

Krissada Heebthong went the distance for the Thais with a nine-hitter while his teammates took turns in raking Jon Jon Robles, Charlie Labrador and Darwin de la Calzada for 11 hits.

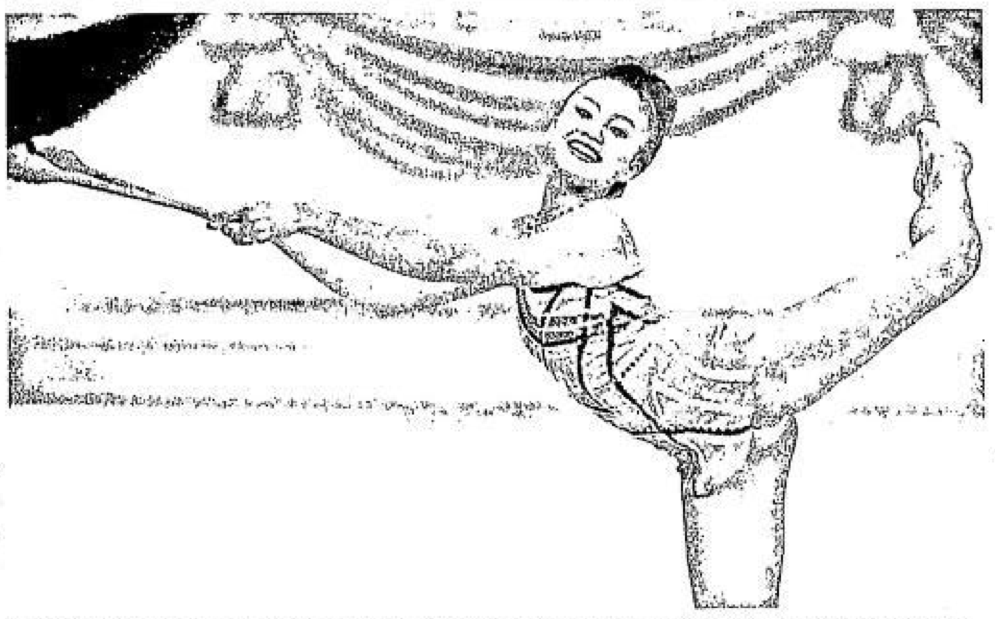
Heebthong, the same pitcher who humbled the Filipinos in the Asiad, completed his heroics by holding the defending champions to two runs in the upper half of the ninth inning to set the final score.

The Filipinos didn't score until the upper half of the sixth, but the Thais also picked up a run in the bottom half of the inning to make it 5-1.

After another run in the seventh, the Filipinos mounted a desperate comeback in the ninth that fell short.

Ten players were stranded for the Thais, who gave up six errors. The Filipinos had five errors with five LOBs at the end of the three-hour, 10-minute contest.

The linescores R H E
PHILIPPINES—000 001 102—4 9 5
THAILAND—103 001 00x—5 11 6



DANICA Calapatan performs her routine in rhythmic gymnastics' all-around individual qualifying round. Calapatan was running fifth in the 12-strong field. RAFFY LERMA

Indonesians shove Tupaz, Verayo out of contention

By Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—THE LAST PHILIPpine pair in beach volleyball at the 24th Southeast Asian Games here took the exit on Friday after Parley Tupaz and Rhovyl Verayo absorbed a 17-21, 19-21 loss against the Indonesian tandem of Andy Ardiyansah and Koko Darkunkoro.

Tupas-Verayo won its quarterfinal match without yielding a point, but the team could not get a good break against the Indonessians at His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary beach volley court.

Their exit followed that of the Michelle Laborte-Michella Carolino and Heidi Ilustre-Diane Pascua pair in the women's quarterfinals on Friday.

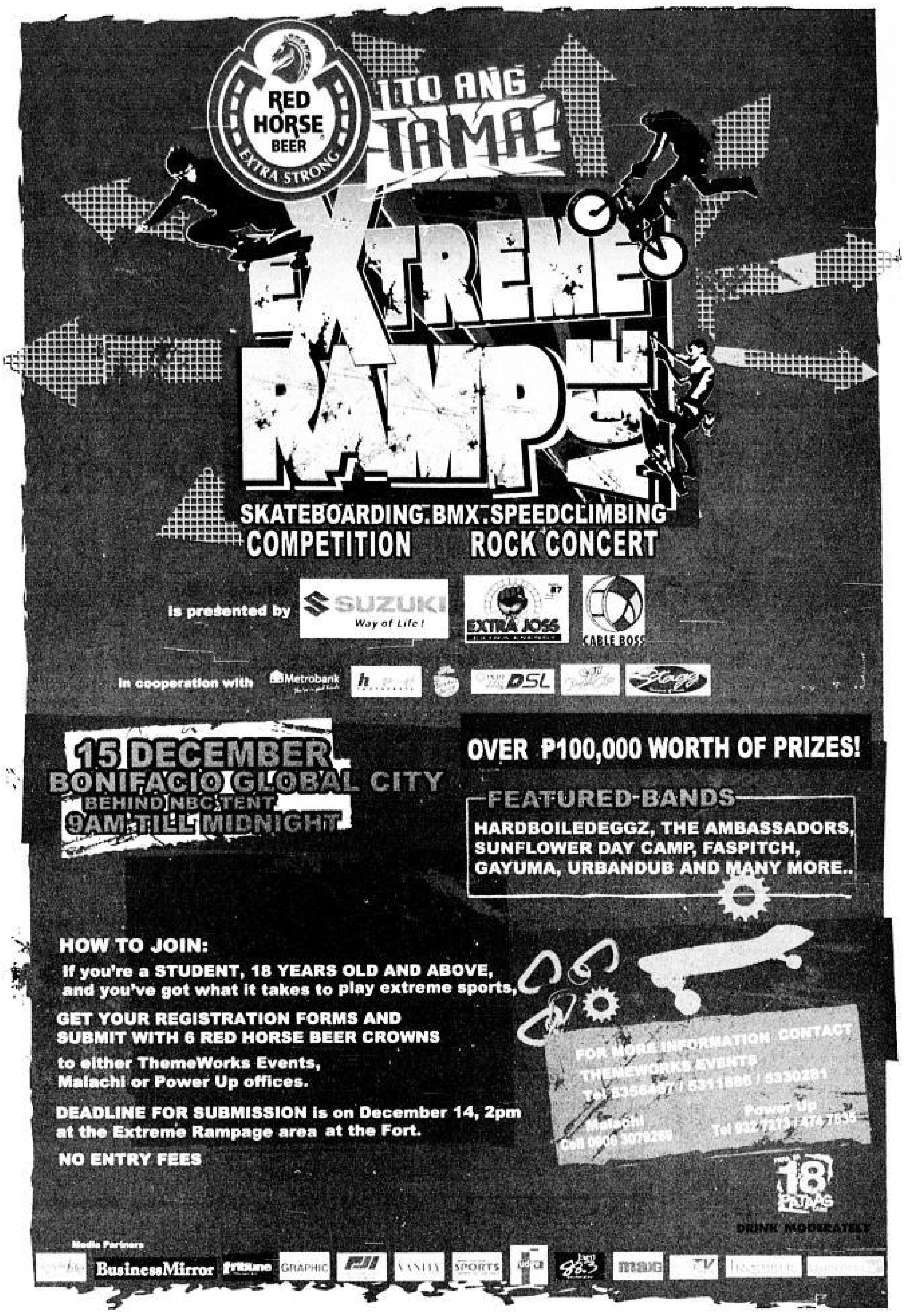
In taekwondo, the Philippines failed to score a followup to Tshomlee Go's taekwondo gold when Lorraine Lorelei Catalan bowed to Malaysia's Elaine Shue Fhern Teo, 3-2, in the women's 51-kilogram final.

Catalan came off easy victories but ran into a crafty foe in the finals, leaving Go as the sport's only gold medalist for the Philippines.

In judo, Tomohiko Hoshina settled for the silver after losing to home bet Tharalat Sutthiphun in the +100 kg final at the RMUTI gymnasium.

That left the sport with only one gold through John Baylon, a silver and seven bronze medals.

Baylon, the enduring 43-year-old bachelor who remained undefeated in the Games since 1991. He won by an ipon victory over Johanes Taslim of Indonesia in 3:25 of their 81 kg final.



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Filipino medalists
(As of Dec. 14, 2007)

GOLD

1. Joey Barba, Mountain Bike (Men's Downhill)
2. Ryan Arabejo, Swimming (Men's 200m Back)
3. Miguel Molina, Swimming (Men's 400m Indiv Medley)
4. Rene Herrera, Athletics (Men's 3000m Steeplechase)
5. Arniel Ferrera, Athletics (Men's Hammer Throw)
6. Benjamin Tolentino Jr. and Jose Rodriguez, Rowing (Men's Double Sculls)
7. Ryan Mendoza, Triathlon (Men's Duathlon)
8. Marestella Torres, Athletics (Women's Long Jump)
9. Emmanuel Reyes and Maira Rosete, Dance Sport (Standard Quickstep)
10. E. Reyes and M. Rosete, Dance Sport, (Standard Tango)
11. Michelle Bruzola, Fencing (Women's Individual Epee)
12. Emerson Segui, Fencing (Men's Individual Foil)
13. Antonio Gabica, Marlon Manalo, Billiards and Snooker (Men's 9-Ball Doubles)
14. Miguel Molina, Swimming (Men's 200m Indiv. Medley)
15. B. Tolentino, Rowing (Men's Lightweight Singles Sculls)
16. Rubilen Amit, Billiards (Women's 9-Ball Pool Singles)
17. Mariane Mariano, Wushu (Women's Under 60kg)
18. Willy Wang, Wushu (Men's Nanquan, 3 events combined)
19. Henry Dagmil, Athletics (Men's Long Jump)
20. Daniel Coakley, Swimming (Men's 50m Free)
21. Miguel Molina, Swimming (Men's 200m Breast)
22. Ryan Arabejo, Swimming (Men's 1500m Free)
23. Victor Espiritu, Track Cycling (Men's Points Race)
24. Amaya Paz, Archery (Women's Individual Compound)
25. Julius Felicisimo Nierras Jr., Athletics (Men's 400m)
26. A. Bornal, A. Victorino Jr., A. Vazayno and W. Vazayno Jr., Fencing (Men's Team Epee)
27. Alfie Catalan, Track Cycling (Men's Individual Pursuit)
28. James Walsh, Swimming (Men's 200m Butterfly)
29. M. Molina, D. Coakley, J. Walsh and R. Arabejo, Swimming (Men's 4x100 IM)
30. J. Chan, A. Paz and A. Tindugan, Archery (Women's Compound)
31. Ronato Alcano, Billiards (Men's 8-Ball Pool Singles)
32. Annie Albania, Boxing (Women's Fly 50kg)
33. Sheila Mae Perez, Aquatics (Diving, 3m Springboard)
34. Marites Bitbit, Cycling (Women's Road Race)
35. Softball (Women)
36. Softball (Men)
37. John Baylon, Judo (Men's Half Middle-81kg)
38. Basketball (Men)
39. Tshomlee Go, Taekwondo (Men's Under 67kg)
40. Cecil Mamiit, Tennis (Men's Single)

SILVER

1. Eric Ang, Carag Carlos and Jethro Dionisio, Shooting (Men's Trap Team)
2. Jaqueline De Guzman, Shooting (Women's Skeet)
3. Paul Brian Rosario, Patricia Bernardo, Gabriel Tong, Shooting (Men's Skeet Team)
4. Mary Grace Milgar, Athletics (Women's 400m Hurdles)
5. Julius Sermona, Athletics (Men's 500m)
6. Rosie Villarito, Athletics (Women's Javelin Throw)
7. Eusebio Quiñones, Mountain Bike (Men's Cross Country)
8. Alvin Amposta and Nestor Cordova, Rowing (Men's Lightweight Double Sculls)
9. Marcus Valda, Wrestling (Men's Freestyle 84kg)
10. Mideil Dique, Athletics (Men's 800m)
11. Harlene Orendain, Fencing (Women's Individual Epee)
12. Gemma Silverio, Wrestling (Women's Freestyle 59kg)
13. Aleen Aragon, Wrestling (Men's Freestyle 74kg)
14. Jimmy Angana, Wrestling (Men's Freestyle 66kg)
15. Nida Cordova and Michelle Gabiligno, Rowing (Women's Double Sculls)
16. George Vilog, Triathlon (Men's Event)
17. Alessandra Acuño, Triathlon (Women's Event)

18. Reyes and Rosete, Dance Sport (Standard Viennese Waltz)
19. Reyes and Rosete, Dance Sport (Standard Slow Foxtrot)
20. John Erolle Melencio and Dearlie Gerodias, Dance Sport (Latin American Jive)
21. J. Melencio and D. Gerodias, Dance Sport (Latin American PD)
22. Walbert Mendoza, Fencing (Men's Individual Sabre)
23. James Walsh, Swimming (Men's 100m Butterfly)
24. M. Molina, D. Coakley, K. Uy and J Walsh, Swimming (Men's 4x100m Free Relay)
25. Julius Sermona, Athletics (Men's 1000m)
26. Mary Jane Estimar, Wushu (Women's Under 52 kg)
27. Benjie Rivera, Wushu (Men's Under 56 kg)
28. M. Atienza, R. Canlas Jr., R. Endriano and E. Segui, Fencing (Men's Team Foil)
29. M. Alfonso, J. Franquelli, W. Mendoza, L. Obadey, Fencing (W Team Sabre)
30. Earl Benjamin Yap, Archery (Men's Individual Compound)
31. Danilo Fresnido, Athletics (Men's Javelin Throw)
32. Deborah Samson, Athletics (Women's Pole Vault)
33. M. Howell, M. Manzanida, V. Nuestro and D. Ramolete, Fencing (W Team Foil)
34. Water Polo (Men)
35. Renante Briones, Weightlifting (Men's 94 kg)
36. E. Dalvo, W. Mendoza, G. Nocom and E. Velez, Fencing (Men's Team Sabre)
37. Nancy Quillotes, Judo (Women's -48kg)
38. Rugby (Men)
39. Erica Totten, Swimming (Women's 200m Butterfly)

40. Alice Kate Aparri, Boxing (Women's Light Fly 46kg)
41. Annaliza Cruz, Boxing (Women's Light Bantam 52kg)
42. Jouvelet Chilem, Boxing (Women's Bantam 54kg)
43. Romyen Sofia, Boxing (Women's Feather 57kg)
44. Mitchel Martinez, Boxing (Women's Light 60kg)
45. Noel Espinosa, Karate (Individual Men's Kata)
46. Marilyn Hunda, Pencak Silat (Women's Under 60kg)
47. Men's Team, Traditional Boat Race (10 Crews 1000m)
48. Nancy Bercasio and Sonia Bruce, Lawn Bowls (Women's Pairs)
49. Alexander Briones, Taekwondo (Men's Under 84kg)
50. Diego Lorenzo, Equestrian (Individual Jumping)
51. Antoinette Rivero, Taekwondo (Women's Under 67kg)
52. Godfrey Castro, Boxing (Men's Fly 51 kg)
53. Junel Cantancio, Boxing (Men's Bantam 54 kg)
54. Jose Mari Pabillore, Karate (Men's Over 75 kg)
55. G. Casem, M. Hablueted, M. Vicente and V. dela Cruz, Petanque (W Triples)
56. Orlando Tacuyan Jr., Boxing (Men's Feather 57 kg)
57. Joegin Ladon, Boxing (Men's Light 60kg)
58. Anya Tanpinco, Golf (Women's Individual)
59. F. Aurezo, A. Fernando, M. Fernando and J. Abeba, Golf (Men's Team)
60. Anya Tanpinco, Chihiro Ikeda and Regina de Guzman, Golf (Women's Team)
61. Cheli Tugday, Karate (Women's Open)
62. Larry Semillano, Boxing (Men's Super Light 64kg)
63. Sheila Mae Perez, Diving (Women's 1m Springboard)
64. Brent Velasco, Muay Thai (Bantam 54kg)
65. Junie Tizon, Boxing (Men's Middle 75 kg)
66. Maximino Tabangcora, Boxing (Men's Light Heavy 81kg)
67. Kirstie Elaine Alora, Taekwondo (Women's Under 59kg)
68. May Libao, Muay Thai (Women's Light Fly 48kg)
69. Anna Joy Fernandez, Muay Thai (Women's Fly 51 kg)
70. Maricel Subang, Muay Thai (Women's Bantam 54 kg)
71. Anna Marie Rey, Muay Thai (Women's Feather 57kg)
72. Lee Vann Corteza, Billiards (Men's 9-Ball Pool Singles)
73. Maria Liza del Rosario and Engelberto Rivera, Bowling (Mixed Doubles)
74. Rexel Fabriga, Diving (Men's 10m Platform)
75. Zardo Domenios and Niño Carog, Diving (Men's Synchronized 3m Spring)
76. Tomohiko Hoshina, Judo (Men's Heavy +100kg)
77. Inrea Tanteo, Karate (Men's Under 60kg)
78. Karate (Women's Team Kumite)
79. German Paz, Sailing (Olympics RS:X)
80. Renerick Moreno, Sailing (Formula Windsurfing)
81. Traditional Boat Race (Men's 10 Crews 500m)
82. Traditional Boat Race (Women's 10 Crews 500m)
83. Baseball
84. Loraine Lorelie Catalan, Taekwondo (Women's Under 51kg)
85. Mary Ann Basas, Billiards (Women's 6-Red Snooker Singles)
86. Zardo Domenios, Diving (Men's 1m Springboard)
87. Sailing (Men's International 470)
88. Sailing (Men's International 420)
89. Sailing (Fair Patu 25)

BRONZE

1. Emerito Concepcion, Shooting (Men's 10m Air Rifle)
2. Men's Hoop, Sepak Takraw
3. Women's Hoop, Sepak Takraw
4. Eliezer Sunang, Athletics (Men's Shot Put)
5. Joebert Delicano, Athletics (Men's Triple Jump)
6. Nino Surban, Mountain Bike (Men's Cross Country)
7. Marites Bitbit, Mountain Bike (Women's Cross Country)
8. Maribel Jambora, Wrestling (Women's Freestyle 48kg)
9. Ma. Cristina Vergara, Wrestling (Women's Freestyle 51kg)
10. Clotilde Nitas, Johnalyn Poblete, Rowing (Women's Lightweight Double Sculls)
11. Frederick Taino and Cecil Mamiit, Tennis (Men's Team)
12. Denice Dy and Diane Matias, Tennis (Women's Team)
13. August Benedicto, Triathlon (Men's Duathlon)
14. Analiza Dysangco, Triathlon (Women's Duathlon)
15. Reyes and Rosete, Dance Sport (Standard Waltz)
16. Reynato Rainer Mercado, Judith Anne Melendo, Dance Sport (Lat-Am Cha Cha)
17. Rolando Canlas Jr., Fencing (Men's Individual Foil)
18. Joanna Franquelli, Fencing (Women's Individual Sabre)
19. Arnold Villarube, Athletics (Men's Decathlon)
20. J. Bano, J. Nierras Jr., R. Tanuan Jr and E. Candelario, Athletics (M 4x400 Relay)
21. Kendrick Uy, Swimming (Men's 100m Free)
22. Jaclyn Pangilinan, Swimming (Women's 100m Breast)
23. N. Santiago, J. Pangilinan, G. Gandionco, E. Totten, Swimming (W 4x100m Free Relay)
24. Eduardo Buenavista, Athletics (Men's Marathon)
25. Jho Ann Banayag, Athletics (Women's Marathon)
26. Jose Rodriguez, Rowing (Men's Single Sculls)
27. Arland Macasieb, Triathlon (Men)
28. Maria Melsa Lucas, Triathlon (Women)
29. Hidilyn Diaz, Weightlifting (Women's 58 kg)
30. Margarito Angana, Wrestling (Men's Freestyle 55 kg)
31. Daniel Parantac, Wushu (Men's Taijquan-2 events)
32. Janice Hung, Wushu (Women's Taiyquan-2 events)
33. Bill Vicente Vicera, Boxing (Men's Pin 45kg)
34. M. Bitbit, Road Cycling (Women's Individual Time Trial)
35. J. Melencio and D. Gerodias, Dance (Latin Amer. Samba)
36. Claro Roland, Muay Thai (Flyweight 51 kg)
37. Rene Catalan, Wushu (Men's Under 52 kg)
38. Michelle Manzanida, Vanna Tessa Nuestro (tie), Fencing (Women's Indiv. Foil)
39. Edmon Velez, Fencing (Men's Individual Sabre)
40. Ryan Arabejo, Swimming (Men's 400m Freestyle)
41. Reynato Rainer Mercado and Judith Anne Melendo, Dance Sport (Lat-Am Cha Cha)
42. Robert Andrew Garcia, Squash (Men's Singles)
43. Roque Mana-ay Jr., Wrestling (Men's Freestyle 60kg)
44. M. Brazato, M. Galvez, M. Kong and H. Orendain, Fencing (W Team Epee)
45. Romnick Gino Pabalate, Muay Thai (Light Fly 48 kg)
46. Jul-Omar Abdulhalim, Pencak Silat (Men's Under 50kg)
47. Emmada Asmad, Pencak Silat (Women's Under 55kg)
48. Lamson Zaid, Muay Thai (Feather 57kg)
49. Emerson Obiena, Athletics (Men's Pole Vault)
50. Jan Paul Morales, Cycling Track (Men's 1km Time Trial)
51. Jaclyn Pangilinan, Swimming (Women's 200m Breast)
52. Erica Totten, Swimming (Women's 200m Free)
53. Daniel Parantac, Wushu (Men's Taijquan-2 events)
54. Marcelita Manipol, Athletics (Women's 10,000m)
55. Narcisa Atienza, Athletics (Women's Heptathlon)
56. Albert Pabila, Boxing (Light Fly 48kg)
57. Ofad Jay, Muay Thai (Light 60 kg)
58. Harold Gregorio Jay, Muay Thai (Men's Welter 67kg)
60. Dulce Punongbayan, Bodybuilding (Women's Fitness)
61. Marvin Cordero, Mark Javier and Ian Wayne Larsen, Archery (Men's Recurve)
62. Helen Dawa, Judo (Women -52 kg Half-Light)
63. Estergay Livanes, Judo (Women -57 kg Light)
64. Mae Soriano, Karate (Women's Under 53kg)
65. Ramon Hector Franco, Karate (Men's Under 55kg)
66. Rolando Lagman, Karate (Men's Under 65kg)
67. Jul-Omar Abdulhalim, Pencak Silat (Men's Under 50 kg)
68. Emmada Asmad, Pencak Silat (Women's Under 55kg)
69. Women's Team, Sepak Takraw (Regu)
70. Juan Ernesto Mendoza III, Taekwondo (Men's Under 78kg)
71. Women's Team, Traditional Boat Race (10 Crews 1000m)
72. Richard Pep Agosto, Weightlifting (Men's 105 kg)
73. Rosita Bradborn, Lawn Bowls (Women's Singles)
74. A. Morales, E. Portazo and H. Mercado, Lawn Bowls (Men's Triples)
75. A. Knight, M. Witheridge and R. Greenlees, Lawn Bowls (Women's Triples)
76. Ma. Criselda Roxas, Taekwondo (Women's Under 72kg)
77. Zardo Domenios, Diving (Men's 3m Springboard)
78. Futsal (Women)
79. Karen Ann Solomon, Judo (Women's Middle -70kg)
80. Rick Jayson Senales, Judo (Men's Middle -90kg)
81. Mona Esperanza Manansala, Karate (Women's Under 60kg)
82. Cheli Tugday, Karate (Women's Over 60kg)
83. Eric Taino and Diane Matias, Tennis (Mixed Doubles)
84. Esther Marie Singson, Taekwondo (Women's Under 55kg)
85. Veronica Domingo, Taekwondo (Women's Under 63kg)
86. Basketball (Women)
87. Antonio Gabica, Billiards (Men's 9-Ball Pool Singles)
88. Ruth Dugaduga, Judo (Women's Half-Heavy -78kg)
89. Erika Joy Ponciano, Judo (Women's Heavy +78)
90. Karate (Men's Team Kumite)
91. Geylord Coveta, Sailing (Mistral One Design Light)
92. Kathleen Eunice Alora, Taekwondo (Women's Under 47kg)
93. Carlos Jose Padilla, Taekwondo (Men's Under 58kg)
94. Denise Dy and Diane Matias, Tennis (Women's Doubles)

Yang pips Corteza in 9-ball final

CORTEZA

By Musong R. Castillo

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—INDONESIA'S Ricky Yang played super steady Friday afternoon to nip the Philippines' Lee Vann Corteza, 11-8, for the 9-ball singles gold medal in the 24th Southeast Asian Games at the Sima Thani Hall here.

The veteran Yang foiled Corteza's bid to give the country a sweep of both men's divisions after Ronnie Alcano, the former world 9-ball champion who was not considered for the event, won the 8-ball three nights back.

Yang was in control all throughout against the crafty Filipino, who finished second to Taiwan's Chan Jun-ling in the Guinness Tour Grand finals this year.

The 28-year-old Corteza, who lost in the Last 64 of the World Pool Championship in Manila last month, was the second straight Filipino scalp that Yang claimed after he took out Antonio Gabica in the semifinals, 11-7.

Alcano, after winning the 8-ball gold, was still in the athletes' village Friday morning awaiting his chance to come home. He never really knew why he wasn't considered to play for the Philippines in the event where he was once the best in the world.

"I played in an exhibition game in Bangkok the other day and made some money on the side," Alcano, 35, told the INQUIRER in Filipino Friday, hours before Corteza's match with Yang.

"I would have loved to play in the 9-ball. But I wasn't considered."

Corteza got this far after bundling out Brunei Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee and WPC veteran Zulfikri Muhamad via 11-8 scores.

Billiards contributed three golds for the Philippines—the men's 9-ball doubles (Marlon Manalo and Antonio Gabica), Rubilen Amit's 9-ball triumph and Alcano's victory. In the 2005 Manila meet, Amit and Alcano won two golds each.

'They should've fought'

PSC chair bewails RP boxing's protest walkout

By Ernesto A. Gonzales

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—THE boxers should have been made to fight because that's the sporting thing to do.

This was the reaction of Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez Friday to the decision by officials to make a mockery of the boxing finals in protest of what they claimed was biased judging against the Filipino fighters.

Although aborting a plan to boycott the final bouts featuring seven Filipinos against Thai opponents, amateur boxing president Manny Lopez surrendered the gold medals either by retirement before a punch was thrown or quitting halfway through the action.

"*Kung hindi man sila* sport, *hindi tayo dapat bumaba sa* level *nila* (If the Thais are unsportsmanlike, we should not have stooped to their level)," said Ramirez, who was on his way here from Manila when news of the boxing farce reached him late Thursday.

Lopez, who is an official of the international boxing body, blew his top when five of the six RP female fighters lost all their gold medal fights to the Thais Wednesday.

Saying he does not want to be a part of the comic show, Lopez sought a meeting with RP officials, led by Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose Cojuangco Jr. and chief of mission Monico Puentevella, who later gave the boxing chief the power to decide on whether to boycott or go on with Thursday's final boxing program.

"A statement has to be made that we will not legitimize the biased officiating that is rampant here not only in boxing and not only against the Philippines," PSC commissioner and RP deputy chief of mission Richie Garcia said.

Cojuangco later confirmed its support of Lopez's action at the height of the supposed "mockery" in boxing.

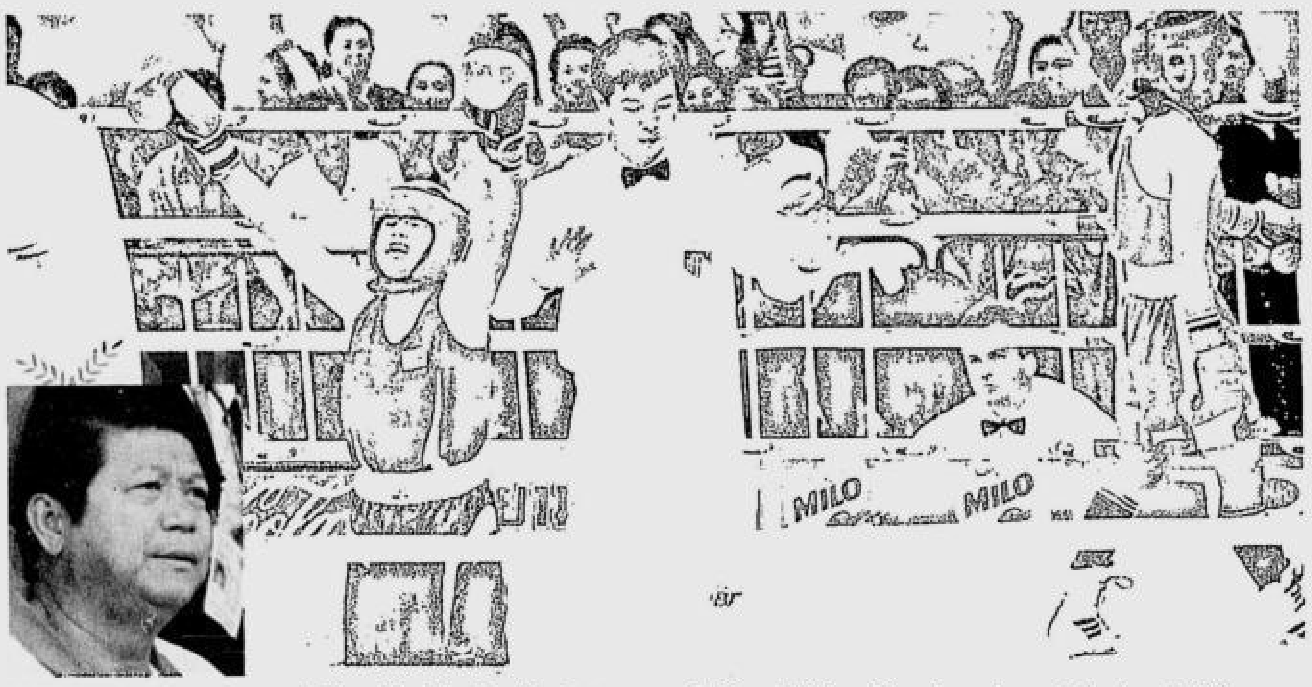
But Ramirez said the matter should have been tackled dispassionately with the greater issue of sportsmanship and goodwill, which are among the major concerns of these Games, taken into consideration.

"What should have been done was to take a step back, draw a deep breath and not let your emotions affect your decision, especially in an international sporting competition such as these Games," he said.

Ramirez said the country could file a protest, both formal and informal, if its athletes are being cheated, adding that the action by Lopez may affect the country's future participation in the SEAG.

It was actually the possible international repercussions that forced Lopez to change his boycott plans.

Warned by international boxing chief Wu Ching-kuo that the country could face a two-year ban, RP officials decided to let Orlando Tacuyan Jr. take on his Thai opponent.



DEFEATS such as the one inflicted by Thai Sopida Satumrum (left) on Filipino Alice Aparri are at the heart of the protest-walkout which PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez (inset) found unnecessary. RAFFY LERMA

A time for heroes, and villains, too

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

NAKHON RATCHASIMA—THERE WAS GRATING regret among NBN-4 television crewmen when they learned a few minutes late that mountain bike's Jovy Barba had landed RP's first gold in the 24th Southeast Asian Games.

This was midmorning of Dec. 6, the Games opening day.

NBN production head Edgar Reyes squinted and shook his head, trying to ward off frustration.

No assigned NBN cameraman at the finish line, no video feed of the event from the site of the downhill bike race either.

There was a mini disaster brewing.

The government coverage team could not afford to let one golden moment slip for excited viewers back home.

* * *

Not to worry. The NBN team, with logistics man Manny de Asis promptly dashing out of sight, would pull strings at the International Broadcast Center.

By mid-afternoon, NBN had a video of the opening gold for Team Philippines, courtesy of friends from Thai television.

Barba's golden feat, a *buena mano*, was played up to anchor a subsequent 11-gold RP medal harvest on the third day of the Southeast Asian Games in this charming, quiet, tree-lined capital three hours by car from Bangkok.

* * *

For the record, Reyes reported, NBN-4 has not allowed a single RP gold medal slip.

He said the government television coverage team here, which got a rah-rah visit from chairman Rolly Reyes on the eve of the opening, has faithfully recorded and reported all vital details of the Philippine participation.

NBN came here with a medium-size crew, backed by six broadcasters, in pursuit of the coverage theme "A Time for Heroes."

It was mostly a toast to Filipino victors but, at the same time, it could not be helped that losers, including a few Filipino villains, also surface on the television screen.

* * *

OK, this is a little exaggerated, but among the unseen, unsung heroes here are some 30 staffers, the core of the NBN work crew, flown over for the Games.

You bet that's a huge group, twice the size of a basketball team.

But it could be oversized if it's only basketball, boxing and billiards the TV crew has had to cope with. Filipino athletes have participated in a total of 43 events here.

"By a plain count, we are directly involved in the coverage of 30 events here, excluding those in Pattaya and Bangkok," explained NBN-4 delegation head Bobby Arias.

* * *

Indeed, the challenge could be daunting, awesome as crossing the ocean when all you have is a frail boat for a short ride down the river.

The good news is that, with a day left in the 24th Southeast Asian Games Friday, the intrepid NBN team has reached shore commendably.

It's not very easy, bared chief producer Chit Gatan, but the secret is multi-tasking.

For example, technical expert Louie Lamata, on a regular 8 a.m. to midnight shift, takes care of not two or three, but a total of 12 studio monitors.

One cameraman provides technical support, does editing and, at the same time, run assorted errands.

They have an unsavory name for this type of coverage: guerilla operation.

* * *

Naturally, with NBN-4 crew up on its toes 24 hours a day, practically everything involving the RP participation, like defeat and frustration, gets its deserved footage.

For example, there was also focus on the villains who tried to conceal their perennial ineptitude with an unwarranted walkout in boxing, thereby displaying the ugly side of the Filipino here.

Yes, it's not defined among its role, but when it showed the glaring inferiority of the RP women boxers against their Thai rivals, NBN-4 has, in a big way, also helped discourage mediocrity in Philippine sports.

Please send in more heroic, dedicated Filipino sports officials.

* * *

(**THOMASIAN CALL:** Tonight, at the Ricco Renzo Art Gallery, LRI Bldg., 2001 N. Garcia (formerly Reposo), Makati City, coach Pido Jarencio and members of the UST Growling Tigers will help host the fund-raising affair of the Thomasian Alumni Support for the varsity team in its 2008 UAAP campaign. Ruth Navarra says team mementoes will be auctioned off, with the hope of raising funds also for UST campaign in the UAAP, where the Pontifical University has been overall champion for over a decade. Please call 0927-3523071.

BIG WINNERS ON GOLD CUP DAY
Pre-race favorite Native Land, with jockey Jesse Guce on board (near left photo), cruises to victory with plenty to spare in the 35th running of the PCSO Presidential Gold Cup race last Sunday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park. PCSO chair Sergio Valencia (second from left) and committee on races vice chair Rey Empremiado (left) join the owners of the champion horse as they hold their prized trophies and an oversized check for P1.5 million, including owner Antonio "Tony" Tan Jr. (center), trainer Anthony Henson, rider Jesse Guce and Alex Mamon, representing C&H Enterprises, breeder of Native Land.

Baseball steroids 'rogue's list' littered with stars

BONDS AP

CLEMENS AFP

PETTITTE AFP

GIAMBI AP

TEJADA AP

NEW YORK—SEVEN-TIME PITCHER of the year Roger Clemens was one of the most prominent players identified Thursday in Major League Baseball's long-awaited investigation into doping, linked along with more than 80 players to performance-enhancing drugs that put a question mark next to some of American baseball's biggest moments.

All-time home run record holder Barry Bonds, already under indictment on charges of lying to a federal grand jury about doping, former player of the year Miguel Tejada and former All-Star Andy Pettitte also were identified Thursday in MLB's most notorious moment since the "Black Sox" scandal.

The Black Sox were so branded when eight players of the Chicago White Sox were accused of intentionally losing the 1919 World Series championship.

Known as the "Mitchell Report" after its author, former US Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, the 20-month investigation was commissioned by MLB commissioner Bud Selig to examine doping in American baseball.

Seven player-of-the-year award winners were identified in the report along with a supporting cast good enough to field an All-Star at every position.

Clemens, who had denied the allegations, was singled out in nearly nine pages, 82 references by name. Much of the information on Clemens came from former New York Yankees strength and conditioning coach Brian McNamee.

"The illegal use of performance-enhancing substances poses a serious threat to the integrity of the game," the report said. "Widespread use by players of such substances unfairly disadvantages the honest athletes who refuse to use them and raises questions about the validity of baseball records."

Major League Baseball has never adhered to international doping rules. MLB players and club owners agreed to testing late in the 2002 season. The program has been modified since then to include more substances, and penalties have been increased for violations, but still far short of internationally accepted standards.

While records by the offenders identified unlikely will be voided, several of them could see their chance for enshrinement in the Hall of Fame diminished.

"If there are problems, I wanted them revealed," Selig said. "His report is a call to action, and I will act."

Eric Gagne, Gary Sheffield, Jason Giambi, Troy Glaus, Gary Matthews Jr., Paul Byrd, Jose Guillen, Brian Roberts, Paul Lo Duca and Rick Ankiel were among other current players named in the report—in fact, there's an All-Star at every position. Some were linked to Human Growth Hormone, others to steroids.

"It is very unfair to include Roger's name in this report," said Clemens' lawyer, Rusty Hardin. "He is left with no meaningful way to combat what he strongly contends are totally false allegations. He has not been charged with anything, he will not be charged with anything and yet he is being tried in the court of public opinion with no recourse. That is totally wrong." *AP*

Rodriguez remains a Yankee for US$275M

NEW YORK—ALEX RODRIGUEZ SET ANother record for baseball's highest contract, finalizing his $275 million, 10-year agreement with the New York Yankees on Thursday.

A-Rod set the previous mark with his $252 million, 10-year deal with Texas in December 2000. Traded to the Yankees in 2004, he opted out of that contract Oct. 28, during the final game of the World Series.

Yankees senior vice president Hank Steinbrenner said New York would not negotiate further with Rodriguez because his decision eliminated the $21.3 million subsidy the Yankees were to receive from Texas from 2008-10, a figure negotiated at the time of the trade.

But Rodriguez then approached the Yankees through a managing director at Goldman Sachs and negotiated his new deal in early November without agent Scott Boras.

"It seemed like the whole thing was a rollercoaster. It was very emotional," Rodriguez said on a conference call. "All along, I knew I wanted to be a Yankee."

The three-time MVP said opting out was "a mistake that was handled extremely poorly."

"It was a huge debacle," he said, calling the timing "distasteful and very inappropriate."

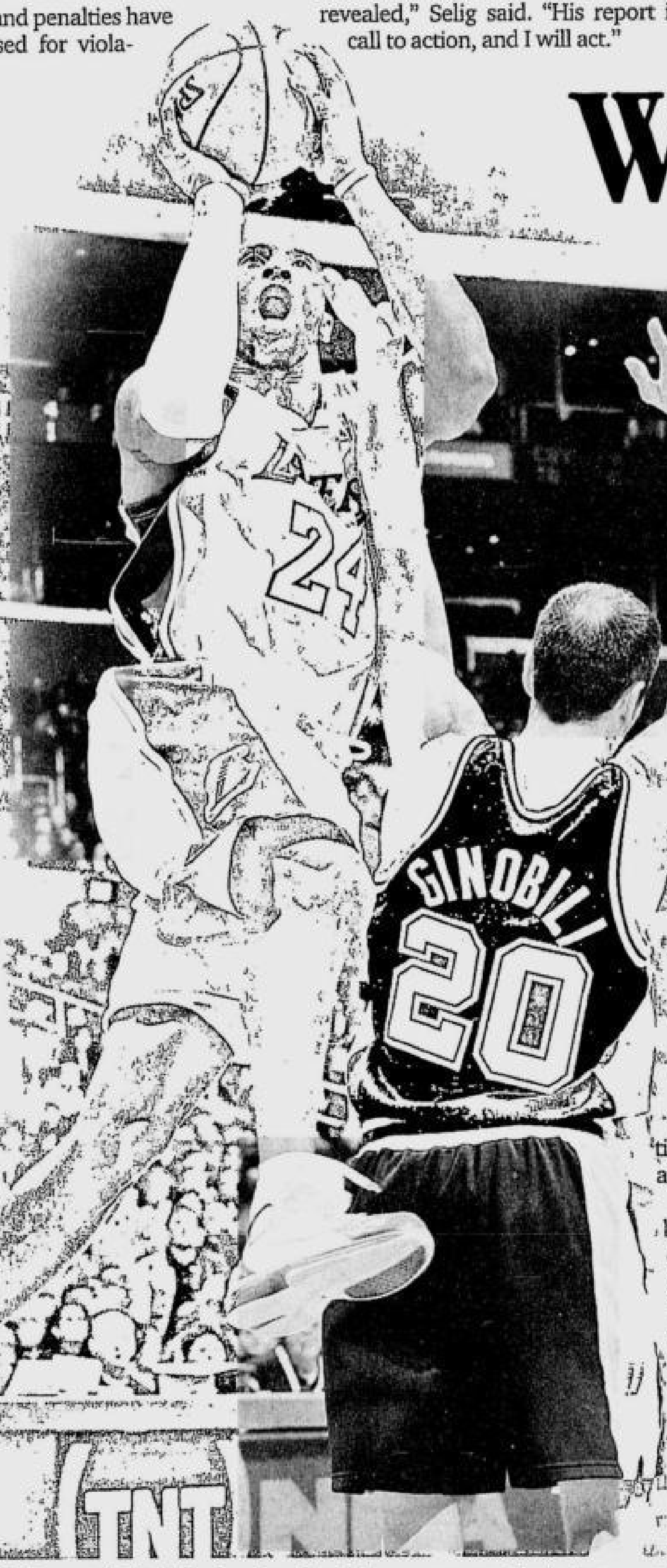
Boras quickly apologized. A-Rod said he told Boras how he felt.

"The one time we spoke, I conveyed that message," he said.

Rodriguez said Boras gave him the impression the Yankees weren't interested in bringing him back, which surprised him.

"Our goals were not aligned," Rodriguez said. "It felt funny to me." *AP*

Wizards thwart Heat; Lakers trip Spurs



KOBE Bryant (left) of the Los Angeles Lakers soars past the token defense of San Antonio's Manu Ginobili. AFP

LOS ANGELES—TWO OF their three stars were sidelined, the third had a sub-par game, and the San Antonio Spurs still gave the Los Angeles Lakers all they could handle.

Kobe Bryant scored 30 points, and the Lakers used an 18-5 fourth-quarter spurt to break open a close game and beat the Spurs, 102-97, on Thursday night for their fourth straight victory.

"We expected that from them," said Lakers forward Lamar Odom, who had 15 points and eight rebounds. "We were able to lock down and get some stops when we needed them."

The defending NBA champion Spurs (17-5), losers of two straight for the first time this season, played without Tim Duncan and Tony Parker.

Duncan, averaging 17.6 points and 8.9 rebounds, sat out his fourth straight game because of a sprained right knee. Parker, averaging 20.1 points and 6.8 assists, missed his first game of the season with a sprained left ankle.

"Very choppy game. The Spurs can make you play like that," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said. "Their defense is solid, no matter who they put out there."

Manu Ginobili, averaging a team-leading 20.8 points, scored only 14 and committed seven of San Antonio's 16 turnovers. He shot 5-of-17 and picked up his fifth foul with 10:27 remaining and the Lakers leading 78-76.

"It was hard," Ginobili said. "I tried at the beginning to play off the ball and find the open man. But we weren't making those shots, and I wasn't making mine, either. You've got to give them credit, too, they played a good defense on me.

"We just didn't execute the last five or six minutes."

After Bruce Bowen's 3-pointer early in the fourth quarter tied the game at 81, two baskets by Vladimir Radmanovic triggered the game-breaking spurt that gave the Lakers (13-8) a 99-86 lead with 3:40 remaining. San Antonio scored the final five points after the outcome had been decided.

"Defensively, we made our rotations a little bit faster, closed out on the shooters a little bit," said Bryant, who also had seven rebounds and three assists.

The Washington Wizards won in Miami for the first time in four years, easing to a 104-91 road victory over the Heat.

DeShawn Stevenson led the Wizards with a season-high 26 points as he connected on six three-pointers, a personal best.

The victory was Washington's first in Miami since April 11, 2003 and ended a 10-game losing streak at the American Airlines Arena.

Stevenson scored 12 of Washington's 28 first-period points as the Wizards grabbed a 12-point lead. The margin was stretched to 19 on a Caron Butler jumper in the third quarter and the Heat were never able to make it a close contest.

"Everybody is just stepping up night in and night out," Butler said. "DeShawn Stevenson made real big baskets tonight." *AP, Reuters*

Furyk grabs Target lead, Tiger trails by one

TIGER Woods follows through with his drive at the second hole. REUTERS

THOUSAND OAKS, CALIFORNIA—TIGER Woods went 10 weeks and four days without hitting a golf shot that mattered, and it hardly showed Thursday in the Target World Challenge when he struck just about everything where he was aiming.

Until he got to the final hole.

Woods pulled his approach into the hazard on the 18th hole to finish with a double bogey for a 3-under 69, leaving him in a pack of players one shot behind Jim Furyk in the final tournament of the year.

"It's frustrating the way it ended, no doubt, because it was a good round of golf," Woods said.

The only regrets were failing to birdie two par 5s on the back nine at Sherwood Country Club because of poor pitches, and making a mess of the final hole.

Furyk had not played since the PGA Grand Slam of Golf in Bermuda on Oct. 17, and was pleasantly surprised how he recovered from a shaky opening tee shot. He dropped only one shot on a gorgeous day in the Conejo Valley, and his birdie on the final hole eventually put him atop the leaderboard in the 16-man field.

US Masters champion Zach Johnson came on strong down the stretch, with consecutive birdies and an unlikely scramble on the par-5 16th. He hit what he called a "chunk-push" with his 3-wood into the water, took a penalty drop that landed on shredded bark, dumped that one into a greenside bunker and holed it for a routine par. He wound up with a 69.

Also at 69 were Henrik Stenson and Rory Sabbatini, two guys who have no rust at all. *AP*

McLaren apologizes over spy mess

WOKING, ENGLAND—THE McLaren team apologized Thursday for its role in the Formula One spy scandal.

In a letter to FIA's World Motorsport Council, McLaren chief operating officer Martin Whitmarsh expressed his embarrassment that secret Ferrari documents had been more widely spread through his team than originally thought.

McLaren was fined a record $100 million in September by the WMSC for unauthorized possession of confidential Ferrari materials. The team was also kicked out of the constructors' championship.

McLaren now acknowledges that some Ferrari information had been disclosed directly, or indirectly, to people within the company apart from test driver Pedro de la Rosa and former driver Fernando Alonso.

"We apologize unreservedly if our prior ignorance of some of these facts has misled the World Motor Sports Council and we can only assure you all that this was never our intention," Whitmarsh wrote.

Whitmarsh said McLaren's own investigations into the case were insufficient and it was "a matter of deep regret for us that our understanding of the facts has improved as a result of a FIA inspection rather than our own prior investigations." *AP*

Crown prince installs his own table

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, THAILAND—Brunei's Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah has installed a pool table in his hotel suite to ensure he can practice in luxurious surroundings for the Southeast Asian (SEA) Games nine-ball competition.

Billah, a member of his country's cue sports team, forked out several thousand dollars to have a table put in his Nakhon Ratchasima's Royal Princess Hotel suite, where he practiced fervently.

"Normally, we wouldn't allow pool tables in the hotel but he is a very special guest," a hotel supervisor said. "The crown prince has been practicing in his suite all this week."

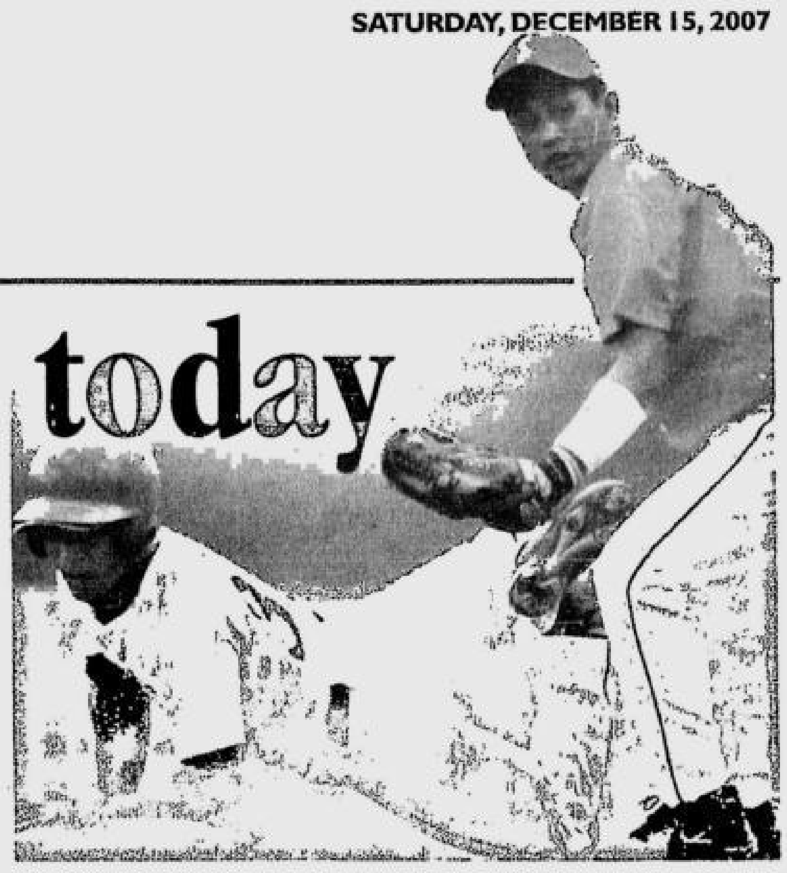
Billah, who is the first born son and heir to the mega-rich Sultan Hassanl Bolkiah, has been kept under close guard by at least two dozens plain clothes and uniformed police officers throughout this week's SEA Games.

The 33-year-old has been travelling in a motorcade of 12 vehicles and is accompanied by an entourage of at least 10 people, which include assistants, bodyguards and chefs.

Bomb squad officers have been scouring the entire hotel each morning before he leaves to watch the Games and a private dining room has been set up for him.

However, despite his lavish preparations, Billah was ousted Wednesday from the 9-ball singles event by Lee Vann Corteza of the Philippines, who was set to face Indonesia's Ricky Yang in Friday's final. *Reuters*

Dumaguete battles Cebu today



LITO Pulgo's base steal off Manila Sharks' Larry Icban in a recent game typifies the Dumaguete Unibikers' intensity. RYAN LIM

GAMES TODAY (*Rizal Ballpark*)
9 a.m.—Dumaguete vs Cebu
1 p.m.—Marikina vs Manila

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE STARTED THE SEASON WITHOUT a full lineup and with the least number of national team imports, but the Dumaguete Unibikers have since counted the drawbacks as blessings in disguise.

Since they don't rely heavily on reinforcements from the national team—unlike the five other teams in the ongoing Baseball Philippines Series 2—the Unibikers were least affected when the RP team recalled its players for the Southeast Asian Games.

"There are only a few of us, we have no choice but to play," said Dumaguete playing team manager Lito Pulgo in Filipino. "As it is there are only 11 of us now."

But that's just enough for Dumaguete to force its way to the South Division championship against twice-to-beat qualifier Cebu at 9 a.m. today at the Rizal Memorial Ballpark.

Marikina, which ousted defending champion Makati last Saturday, will gun for the North Division pennant against twice-to-beat Manila at 1 p.m.

Wins by Dumaguete and Marikina will forge sudden-death title duels on Sunday.

Dumaguete has tapped playing assistant manager Kelly Culubong and veteran Jay Aranzanso to fill up the place of RP ace pitcher Darwin dela Calzada. The duo helped beat Taguig, 7-6, last week.

The Cebu Dolphins, who lost RP standouts Joseph Orillana, Jonash Ponce, Fulgencio Rances and Saxson Omandac, will have a full arsenal with hot batters Miggy Corcuera, Nico Uichico and movie actor Richard Gomez, who recently whipped up a two-run double against Marikina.

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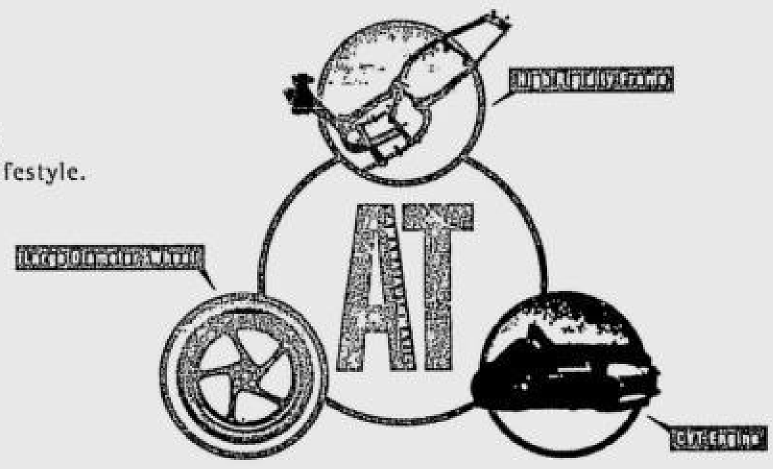

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PSBA Jaguars tear Wildcats, gain solo 2nd

THE PHILIPPINE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS Administration Jaguars routed the National College of Business and Arts Wildcats, 85-62, yesterday in the 15th Smart-National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA) men's basketball tournament at the Arellano University gym.

A 19-9 blast, led by Thirdy Pabillore, Joebert Manguera and Vic Manuel, powered the Philip Cezar-mentored Jaguars to their fifth triumph in six games and past the Philippine Merchant Marine School Mariners at second spot.

The PATTS School of Aeronautics Sea Horses subdued the Asian College of Science and Technology Lightnings, 88-82.

With Red Bull center Mark Andaya helping out coach Mel Alas in calling the shots, the Sea Horses found themselves in third spot at 5-1.

Richard Cruz and RR Campos banged in 18 points apiece for the Sea Horses, while Jayvee Ferreria had 17.

Ferreria put the Sea Horses ahead with 1:54 to go after he connected with a trey off James Abugan's pass, touching off a 7-0 run that gave PATTS an 87-80 lead.

The Lightnings slipped to a share of fifth position with the Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals at 4-3. The reigning titlist Arellano University Chiefs are hanging on to fourth at 4-2.

NCA derby tilt opens Tuesday

THE NATIONAL COCKERS' ASSOCIATION (NCA) will hold the opener of its Derby Circuit on Dec. 18 at the Rizal Multipurpose Building in Pasig City as part of the Rizal Tourism and Agricultural Fair.

Its next big event will be the NCA World Championship Derby on Jan. 8, 10, and 12, 2008.

The start of the circuit will highlight the intense competition among 2007 Cocker of the Year Patrick Antonio, runner-up Iggy Arroyo, Stag Fighter of the Year Butch Pichay, Rey Briones, Benjie Lim, Manny Pacquiao and Nelson Salvanera.

The NCA raises funds for its scholarship program for college students.

Among the NCA members are Rep. Iggy Arroyo and Julio Jalandoni, Jerry Ramos, Bebot Villar, Ferdie Buensalida, Efren Canlas, Butch Pichay, Nonoy Libanan, Rey Briones, Tony Marfori, Jun and Rudy Jingco, Philip Menes, Jet Fernando, Gov. Ito Ynares, Ruel Ricafort, Edgar Santos, Patrick Antonio, chair Rudy Albano, Jimmy Ang, JV Magsaysay, Jun Santiago, Mario Villamor, Beboy Uy and Essie Mallilin, Sec. Ronnie Puno and Danny Valero, Rene Medina, Ric de Guzman, Manny and Armand Santos, Manny Pacquiao and Nelson Salvanera, Eric dela Rosa, Toto Sevilla, Ricky Reyes, Edwin Santos, Boyet Joson, Ellan Nagano, William Co, George Fajardo and Louie Cruz.

SPORTSWATCH

Golfest for street children

FORMER PRESIDENT FIDEL V. RAMOS WILL test the mettle of Secretary Eduardo R. Ermita, the nerve of Finance Secretary Margarito B. Teves, the guts of General Hermogenes Esperon and the determination of top businessmen in a "Touch of Class Invitational Golf Tournament" scheduled on Dec. 16 at 6:30 a.m. at the Villamor Golf and Country Club.

The tournament will benefit street children, according to the Association of Socio-Economic Advancement for Pinoys (Asap), the event organizer.

Tournament supporters include Ethical Pharma, Chemical Company of Malaysia-Phils., PLDT, Smart Communication, Pagcor, Legend Restaurant, Business Mirror, Senator Lito Lapid, Slord Development Corp., Accent Micro Technologies, Inc., MWSS, Gerardo T. Roque, Land Bank, Air21, National Housing Authority, Candyman Corp. and Philippine Thunder Corp.

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Peso closes at 41.21 vs dollar

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO GAINED SLIGHTLY against the US dollar yesterday to close at 41.21, the highest in nearly eight years, despite choppy currency trading elsewhere in Asia.

It was the local currency's strongest finish since ending at 41.18 on April 18, 2000.

Currency traders said overseas Filipino remittances ahead of the Christmas holidays tempered some foreign stock market outflows that, in turn, were caused by uncertainties over the US Federal Reserve's future interest rate cuts.

This developed as global investors scaled back expectations of future interest rate reduction by the US central bank following reports about stronger-than-expected US retail sales and producer price data.

But Asia United Bank senior vice president and head of treasury Antonio Agcaoili Jr. said there was no stopping the peso's appreciation through next year, predicting the local currency would end at 40.50 this year and rally further to 35 to 37 against the greenback next year.

"Oil prices are expected to go down next year so there will be less (dollar) demand for oil importation requirement," Agcaoili said.

He added that US interest rates were still expected to go down next year, with threats of a recession in the world's largest economy likely to prompt further monetary easing by the US Fed. This, in turn, would further weaken the dollar as lower interest rates drive out global funds to high-yielding assets in emerging Asia, including the Philippines.

But Agcaoili also said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas would likely be forced to match future interest rate cuts by the US Fed to temper the peso's strong appreciation.

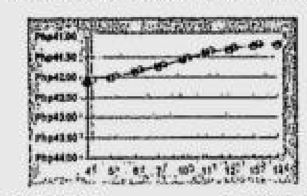
Hong Kong-based HSBC economist Frederic Neumann, in a commentary dated Dec. 12,

PESO/ B6

AND THEY'RE STILL BRINGING HOME THE BACON
Workers arriving from points in the Middle East let out a loud cheer as their plane touched down on Philippine soil in this photo taken last August. In October, remittances from overseas Filipinos reached $1.4 billion, marking a new record.
INQUIRER PHOTO

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



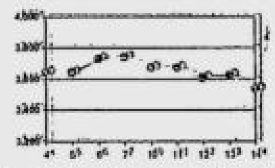
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P41.21 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 14, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares down 2.4%

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY closed 2.4 percent lower as investors turned cautious in the absence of fresh domestic leads and following another volatile session on Wall Street, dealers said.

The continuing unease on Wall Street, despite a number of steps taken by policymakers

SHARES/ B6

IN THIS ISSUE

▨ **Gov't seized** P2.7B worth of pirated goods as of Nov. /B4

▨ **Atlas to start** copper production in Cebu/B6

Inflows channeled through banks said to reach $11.9B

By Doris C. Dumlao

MONEY SENT HOME by overseas Filipinos through banks in October surged by 17.1 percent year-on-year to hit an all-time high of $1.4 billion due to the deployment of more workers abroad as well as improvement in remittance channels, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

This brought the 10-month foreign exchange inflows from overseas Filipino workers to $11.9 billion—up 15.2 percent from the same period last year.

"The sustained increase in remittance inflows may be attributed in part to greater access by overseas Filipinos to Philippine money transfer agents as the number of remittance centers and tie-ups between local institutions with their foreign counterparts increased," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco yesterday said.

He said enhanced and expanded financial services and products made available by banks and other non-bank remittance channels encouraged more Filipinos abroad to course their funds through these channels.

The United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Singapore, Japan and Hong Kong were the major sources of remittances during the review period.

Monthly remittances flowing to the country have been exceeding $1 billion since May 2006, contributing to the sharp appreciation of the peso, which has emerged as Asia's best performing currency so far this year.

Data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration showed that total deployment in October rose by 3.9 percent to 88,058 as expansion in land-based deployment offset the con-

TITLE/ B6

To temper peso, BSP may further ease forex rules

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas (BSP) may be forced to further ease foreign exchange rules to address the sharp rise of the peso, according to investment bank DBS.

Exporters and families of overseas Filipino workers—badly hit by the steep climb of the peso—have been urging government for so long to temper the strengthening currency.

In its latest assessment of emerging and industrialized economies, DBS noted that the Philippine peso is the strongest Asian currency so far this year, marking a year-to-date appreciation of 19.3 percent. This was far stronger than the average 4-percent appreciation posted by nine other Asian currencies.

DBS said the second-best performing currency—the Indian rupee—only appreciated by 12.4 percent, and the Thai baht by 7.5 percent.

"Don't ignore those rumors floating in the market that the central bank may need to introduce forex rules to address the peso's excessive strength," DBS said in the paper. "Without a doubt, the central bank is concerned about what seemed to be unabated appreciation."

The BSP early this year began easing rules on foreign exchange. In one such measure, banks were allowed to buy more foreign currency, thereby creating downward pressure on the peso.

Increasing the overbought limit was a response to the increasing foreign exchange requirements of the corporate sector and helped temper the rise of the peso, the BSP had said.

Another measure implemented earlier was to limit the amount of dollars that banks may sell. The move has the similar effect of easing the appreciation of the peso.

DBS said it had expected the peso to rise this year. But the bank didn't quite foresee the currency breaching the 41-to-the-dollar level, which it did recently.

This development aggravated the already serious plight of exporters and OFWs.

Latest exports growth was registered at 5.4 percent in January to October from a year ago, just about half of the government's target of 11 percent for the full year. Exporters blamed the slower-than-expected exports growth partly to the strong peso and the slowdown in the economies of major export markets.

A rise of the peso makes Philippine-made goods more expensive and therefore less competitive in the world market. As far as families of OFWs are concerned, a rise in the peso means a reduction in the value

TO TEMPER/ B6

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Palinpinon bidding shelved

Steam supply deal still a major issue

By Abigail L. Ho

THE BIDDING FOR THE 192.5-MEGAWATT (MW) Palinpinon geothermal facility and the 146.5-MW Panay diesel-fired power plant package has been shelved indefinitely due to the absence of an approved steam supply contract for the Palinpinon facility.

In an interview after the Joint Congressional Power Commission (JCPC) meeting Thursday, Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. vice president for asset management and electricity trading Froilan Tampinco said the issue of the Palinpinon geothermal resource supply contract (GRSC) was not even taken up.

"What took up a lot of time was the discussion about the recently concluded privatization of (PNOC Energy Development Corp.) and the alleged conflict of interest in relation to the (National Transmission Corp.) bidding," he said in a telephone interview.

He said PSALM had to assess whether or not it could commit a specific bidding schedule to the prequalified bidders or just suspend the auction for Palinpinon indefinitely.

"We probably will have to reschedule by early next year. What's critical is the steam sale agreement. Since we don't have that yet, we really have to discuss whether or not we can already put a specific schedule to it. We're looking at all our options," he explained.

He said the existing GRSC that PNOC-EDC had submitted to the JCPC would have to be tweaked to adapt to an environment with a commercially operating wholesale electricity spot market (WESM).

Instead of a supply agreement without a take-or-pay provision, he said there had to be a certain level of steam covered by a take-or-pay provision so that the new owner of the Palinpinon plant would be assured of a steady steam supply.

With a take-or-pay provision, the future owner of the Palinpinon plant would have to pay for a specific level of steam whether or not it is used by the facility.

The steam field operator, on the other hand, would have to provide the contracted level of steam to the plant owner.

"We won't adopt the original (steam sale agreement) since that was crafted for a non-WESM environment. The contracted steam level for that SSA was 75 percent. For the GRSC now, we're looking at a take-or-pay level of around 50-60 percent," he said.

The plant package was supposed to be auctioned off last Dec. 5, but PSALM decided to move the bid submission deadline to Dec. 19 as it still has to revise the transaction documents for the asset package.

In light of recent developments, however, the Dec. 19 bidding would no longer push through.

Even prior to the Dec. 5 schedule, the issue of the absence of an approved GRSC, or fuel supply agreement, had already been raised as the Palinpinon plant could not be sold without it.

Under RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), National Power Corp.'s geothermal assets and the steamfields that provide fuel to run them will be sold as one package through a public bidding.

However, since PNOC-EDC, the operator of the geothermal steamfields, also underwent its own privatization exercise, the sale structure approved for Napocor's geothermal assets was for the plants to be sold, not with the actual steam fields, but with steam sale agreements attached to them.

The JCPC in May 2006 passed a resolution calling for the submission of an SSA that the body had to approve before any of Napocor's geothermal assets could be auctioned off.

No action, however, was taken on the submitted SSA.

AUB sees profit hitting ₱1.3B

By Doris C. Dumlao

MEDIUM-SIZED Asia United Bank sees its net income rising by 30 percent next year to P1.3 billion on higher fee-based and interest earnings.

In a briefing yesterday, AUB officials said the 10-year-old bank posted P844 million in net income in the first nine months of the year, 28.63 percent higher year-on-year.

They said the bank was expected to breach the P1-billion mark in net profit by the end of this year.

The bank has one of the highest return on equity (ROE) among commercial banks at 20.37 percent and one of the lowest in terms of nonperforming loan ratio at 2.86 percent.

AUB senior vice president and head of treasury Antonio Agcaoili Jr. said interest income for next year was likely to grow by 20-30 percent, driven by robust business from consumer as well as small and medium enterprise (SME) or middle market lending.

He said SME and consumer loans were the market segments likely to deliver reasonable rates of return as opposed to narrowing margins in lending to top-tier corporations.

Remittances from overseas Filipino workers, treasury trading and trust services were seen to contribute to higher fee-based income in the year ahead.

SEN. MANUEL ROXAS II congratulates ShipServ founder and CEO Paul Ostergaard for the opening of the company's global development, telesales and support center in Manila. ShipServ is a UK-based maritime electronic marketplace. With Roxas and Ostergaard are (from left) Magsaysay Maritime Corp. chair and CEO Doris Magsaysay-Ho, ShipServ managing director for Asia Linda Ho McAfee, and ShipServ chair Bruce Kesterton. The company has offices in Copenhagen, Hong Kong and New Jersey.

Makati court freezes funds of PHC

By Daxim L. Lucas

PRIVATE SHAREHOLDERS OF THE Philcomsat group of companies scored a victory yesterday after the Makati Regional Trial Court froze the funds of a subsidiary controlled by a government-appointed rival camp.

Almost immediately, however, the directors of Philcomsat Holdings Corp. (PHC)—led by the Locsin-Poblador group—asked Makati RTC Branch 62 presiding judge Selma Palacio Alaras to inhibit herself from the proceedings, saying that her freeze order on the company's funds violated an earlier ruling of the Court of Appeals on the issue.

"The undue haste with which the honorable presiding judge disposed of the substantive matters raised by defendant-in-intervention clearly reveals her honor's manifest bias and partiality in favor of the plaintiff (the Africa-Bildner group), which is the only party who benefits from these rulings," according to the motion for inhibition filed by the Locsin-Poblador group yesterday.

The long-running corporate dispute pits private shareholders of the Philcomsat group with directors appointed in the past by the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG). At stake is control of the three telecommunications companies and approximately P1 billion in liquid assets held by the group.

The Locsin-Pobldor group had earlier found an ally in the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) which manages the bank accounts of the publicly listed firm. Last Sept. 18, 2007, BPI asked the court to dismiss a move by the Africa-Bildner group to access the accounts allegedly "without authority from the incumbent board of directors of PHC)."

The decision of the Makati RTC, however, is a setback for the Locsin-Poblador group which has now been denied access to company funds.

In a text message to the INQUIRER, representatives of the Africa-Bildner group said the injunction issued by Makati RTC Branch 62 on BPI enjoins the bank from "allowing the Locsin group and their representatives from inquiring, withdrawing or transacting on any PHC account with the bank."

"During the hearing, [the] BPI service manager, who admitted to 'personally servicing' the PHC staff for their [banking] needs, confirmed that one PHC account of P150 million as of Nov. 16, 2006 had been 'dramatically reduced' to P26.6 million, or P125 million was 'removed and spent' in less than one year," the representative said.

The Locsin-Poblador group countered that the Makati RTC's decision was made in complete disregard of an earlier decision by the Court of Appeals and pending motion before the Supreme Court.

CURRENCIES

December 14, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.683340	1.000000	41.1420
Japan	Yen	0.006093	0.008916	0.3668
United Kingdom	Pound	1.396064	2.043000	84.0531
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.087651	0.128268	5.2772
Switzerland	Franc	0.598948	0.876501	36.0610
Canada	Dollar	0.669548	0.979816	40.3116
Singapore	Dollar	0.474476	0.694348	28.5669
Australia	Dollar	0.598948	0.876501	36.0610
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.823456	2.668446	109.7852
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.182614	0.267237	10.9947
Brunei	Dollar	0.472834	0.691946	28.4680
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000073	0.000107	0.0044
Thailand	Baht	0.022680	0.033190	1.3655
UAE	Dirham	0.186095	0.272331	11.2042
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.463400	60.2072
Korea	Won	0.000739	0.001082	0.0445
China	Yuan**	0.092729	0.135700	5.5830
Denmark	Kroner	0.134006	0.196105	8.0682
India	Rupee	0.017357	0.025400	1.0450
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.206385	0.302024	12.4259
New Zealand	Dollar	0.533568	0.780823	32.1246
Sweden	Kroner	0.106153	0.155345	6.3912
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.021123	0.030912	1.2718

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Dec. 13, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Dec. 13, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 14, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	6.8	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	8.6	8.6	8.4	8.6	271,000
73	43.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	59	60	59	59.5	789,500
73.5	53	Bank of the Philippine Islands	63	63	61.5	61.5	1,236,400
748	544	China Banking Corp.	655	655	655	655	1,950
23.5	14	Citystate Savings Bank	23	23	23	23	100,000
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	3,500,000
75.5	47.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	56	56	55	55	2,610,700
65.5	39	Philippine National Bank	49.5	49.5	48.5	48.5	585,800
68	47	Philippine Savings Bank	60	60.5	60	60	1,500
39.57	20.43	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	25	25	24.25	24.5	251,200
90	63.5	Security Bank Corp.	75.5	75.5	75	75.5	142,700
66	42	Union Bank of the Philippines	45	45	44	44.5	850,500
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.92	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4	4	4	4	65,000
2.22	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.86	1.86	437,000
16.25	4.6	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11.25	11.25	11	11.25	202,300
1.6	0.5	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	1	1	1	1	20,000
42.5	29	First Metro Investment Corp.	42.5	42.5	42.5	42.5	400
5.9	4.8	I-Remit Inc.	4.85	4.85	4.8	4.8	216,000
3.8	1.74	Makati Finance Corp.	3.5	3.8	3.5	3.8	57,000
1,970.00	1,580.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,600.00	1,600.00	1,600.00	1,600.00	1,240
5	2.7	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	1,291,000
1,390.00	265	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	1,050.00	1,050.00	1,025.00	1,030.00	20,010
2,500.00	1,970.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,150.00	2,150.00	2,150.00	2,150.00	160
1.94	1.3	iVantage Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.6	1.6	9,376,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	11,870,000
0.57	0.22	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.42	0.43	0.38	0.42	150,000
70.5	49	First Gen Corp.	60.5	61	60.5	61	364,100
92	58	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	72	72	70	70	1,963,200
18.5	8.8	Manila Water Co. Inc.	17.75	17.75	17.5	17.5	1,923,400
105.45	47.73	Manila Electric Co.	84	84	80	80.5	1,842,300
7.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.8	9,864,000
7.4	3.95	Petron Corp.	6	6	5.8	5.8	2,562,000
14.75	6.4	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	6.8	6.9	6.6	6.6	84,000
2.04	0.94	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.28	1.28	3,267,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	3.4	Alaska Milk Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.85	4.85	147,000
2.32	1.48	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.54	1.56	1.5	1.52	606,000
2.2	1.08	CADP Group Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	10,000
61	40.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	49	49	48	48	625,000
9.1	5.7	Pancake House Inc.	8.8	9	8.8	9	35,000
3.1	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.85	2.85	2.8	2.85	567,000
80	42.5	San Miguel Corp. "A"	58	60.5	58	60	619,200
88	43	San Miguel Corp. "B"	58.5	61	58	60.5	2,918,400
20.75	13.5	Universal Robina Corp.	14.25	14.25	14	14	1,348,600
0.55	0.24	Vitarich Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	60,000
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	2.65	EEI Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	121,000
21.5	6	Federal Resources Investment Group Inc.	10	11	10	10.5	1,044,000
9.2	4.95	Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.9	161,000
7	3.65	Republic Cement Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	400,000
2	0.81	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.02	1	1	2,049,000
23	2.12	TKC Steel Corp.	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	146,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.75	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	4.15	4.15	4.1	4.15	110,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	10,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.185	Picop Resources Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	6,100,000
9	6.2	Splash Corp.	8.2	8.4	7.9	8	4,784,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
39	18.75	ABS-CBN Holdings Corp.-PDR	34	34	34	34	75,100
3.9	2.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	30,000
0.185	0.0575	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.125	40,860,000
1.28	0.3	APC Group Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.6	0.6	5,440,000
3.65	1.5	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	2.42	2.44	2.4	2.42	249,000
0.018	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	3,000,000
9.7	5.8	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	7	7	7	7	10,964,000
0.021	0.0095	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	200,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.2	5.2	286,000
1.38	0.6	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	10,000
2.9	0.95	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.36	2.38	2.32	2.36	7,876,000
8	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	10,000
645	400	Ayala Corp.	555	555	535	535	336,810
15.25	7.83	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13	13	13	13	3,000
5.8	2.14	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	884,000
12	5.6	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.5	20,435,000
8	3.5	Filinvest Development Corp.	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.1	33,000
3.55	1.76	House of Investments Inc.	2	2	2	2	132,000
14.5	8.9	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	10.25	10.25	10	10	36,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	8,000
28	1.42	Lodestar Investment Hldgs Corp.	18.75	18.75	17.75	18	60,800
0.95	0.28	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	100,000
11.5	1.5	Minerales Industrias Corp.	6.8	7	6.5	6.5	3,496,000
8.5	3	PAL Holdings Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.3	6.3	32,000
0.28	0.016	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.23	0.23	0.225	0.225	95,250,000
1.54	0.62	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	230,000
0.75	0.19	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.53	2,210,000
452.5	282.92	SM Investments Corp.	350	350	342.5	345	694,370
2.1	1.08	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.26	263,000
0.73	0.15	Sinophil Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	2,610,000
1.06	0.61	Solid Group Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	60,000
2	0.92	South China Resources Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	83,000
2.9	0.93	Vivant Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.2	1.2	5,000
0.75	0.12	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	4,830,000
		PROPERTY					
2.38	1	A Brown Co. Inc.	2.3	2.38	1.98	1.98	29,344,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc	7.1	7.4	7.1	7.3	20,000
19.25	12.08	Ayala Land Inc.	15.5	15.5	14.75	14.75	23,111,800
1.88	1	Belle Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.16	1.2	1,750,000
4.7	3.15	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.6	3.6	125,000
2.04	1.56	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp."A"	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	3,000
2.06	1.7	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp."B"	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	66,000
0.86	0.4	Crown Equities Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	110,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.37	0.37	6,940,000
0.99	0.53	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.81	0.81	55,010,000
6.9	1.1	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.8	244,000
0.47	0.0575	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	1,700,000
1.48	0.61	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1	1	0.98	0.99	2,420,000
2.44	1.32	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.38	1.4	73,642,000
1.12	0.31	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.58	0.59	0.56	0.59	410,000
4.6	2.2	Megaworld Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.85	38,525,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	30,000
5.2	2.2	Metro Pacific Investments Corp-Warrants	2.65	2.9	2.65	2.7	209,000
0.7	0.135	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	200,000
0.86	0.32	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.55	0.56	0.48	0.48	15,140,000
9.2	1.7	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	51,000
23	14.5	Robinson Land Corp.	16.25	16.25	15.5	15.75	8,967,400
5.9	2.05	SM Development Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.85	3.85	132,000
13.5	7.84	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	10.5	10.5	10	10	24,918,700
3.25	1.5	Shang Properties Inc.	2.18	2.2	2.18	2.18	810,000
4.5	0.38	Sta. Lucia Land Inc.	1.94	2	1.84	1.84	2,240,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	290,000
0.49	0.0975	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	5,150,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.8	3,315,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	18.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	21,000
12	7.6	GMA Holdings Inc.	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.2	246,000
11.75	7.5	GMA Network Inc.	7.9	8	7.9	7.9	1,101,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.42	7,863,000
1,750.00	1,180.00	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,480.00	1,480.00	63,080
3,285.00	2,250.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	3,015.00	3,015.00	2,995.00	3,000.00	183,460
8.1	5.5	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	7	7	6.9	7	2,289,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
15.75	2.1	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	14.5	14.5	14	14	541,400
11.5	3.55	IPVG Corp.	7.9	7.9	7.7	7.7	522,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.038	0.038	0.037	0.038	16,300,000
5	1.62	Information Capital Tech. Ventures Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	20,000
0.32	0.05	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.175	6,230,000
2.26	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	2.26	2.26	2.1	2.18	5,111,000
0.0725	0.03	Philweb Corp.	0.046	0.047	0.045	0.047	31,300,000
5.4	1.64	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	1,253,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
2.14	1.22	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	130,000
49	18.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	44.5	44.5	44	44	670,600
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2	2	2	2	100,000
2.7	1.12	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	32,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.8	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.55	2.55	2.48	2.48	364,000
1.52	0.33	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	1.32	1.36	1.26	1.28	5,230,000
1.2	0.55	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	1,400,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.6	iPeople Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	70,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
43	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	29	29.5	29	29	11,600
6	2.04	Macroasia Corp.	4.7	4.75	4.7	4.7	1,601,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.5	632,100
30	5.8	Paxys Inc.	6.3	6.3	5.8	5.9	1,140,000
472.5	380	eTelecare Global Solutions Inc.	390	390	380	382.5	7,320
		MINING					
0.017	0.0085	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	53,000,000
7.2	3.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2	444,000
7.4	3.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.7	298,000
21.25	8.1	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.25	862,000
20.75	8.9	Benguet Corp. "A"	19.75	20	19.25	19.5	281,100
12.75	1.98	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	9.2	9.8	9.2	9.3	21,000
3.1	0.6	GEOGRACE Resources Philippines Inc.	2	2.06	1.88	1.88	67,023,000
0.56	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.51	0.51	0.49	0.5	46,890,000
0.61	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.55	0.55	0.52	0.52	17,280,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	64,600,000
0.041	0.02	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	5,500,000
30	3.6	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	21.25	21.25	20	20	678,200
0.021	0.0088	Omico Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	400,000
0.015	0.007	Omico Corp.-Warrants	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	2,000,000
11.25	3.5	Philex Mining Corp.	9.7	9.7	9.6	9.7	3,168,000
49.5	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	44	44.5	43.5	43.5	46,800
1.36	0.65	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.72	0.75	0.72	0.75	840,000
1.8	0.99	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	693,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.27	Basic Energy Corp.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	3,270,000
0.029	0.011	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.024	56,300,000
0.03	0.011	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.026	0.027	0.026	0.026	29,300,000
13.75	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10	10.75	10	10.25	291,000
0.032	0.0097	The Philodrill Corp.	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.029	751,700,000

AVERAGES			VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	858.33 DOWN	12.35	21,970,360	405,389,685.00
Industrial	4,405.82 DOWN	59.61	55,751,200	813,973,100.00
Holding Firms	1,967.56 DOWN	70.54	200,716,980	776,254,135.00
Property	1,492.64 DOWN	71.83	294,664,900	1,147,867,700.00
Service	1,804.59 DOWN	26.51	84,166,560	773,452,065.00
Mining & Oil	8,340.36 DOWN	122.67	1,102,886,100	261,393,505.00
All Shares Index	2,176.41 DOWN	45.07		
PSEI	3,538.69 DOWN	87.52		
		GRAND TOTALS	1,760,156,100	4,178,030,210.00

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Aussie firm invests $58M in RP mine project

By Amy R. Remo

AUSTRALIAN FIRM CGA MINING LTD. IS spending an additional $58 million in 2008 for construction and development works in its Masbate gold project.

The amount is on top of the $36 million already invested by CGA in the project.

In a statement, Eleazar Quinto, environment and natural resources undersecretary for field operations, said CGA was expected to produce $74 million worth of gold yearly throughout its 8-year potential mine life once the Masbate gold project comes on stream by end 2008.

"The Masbate Gold Project, one of the priority minerals development project in the country, is now in the construction phase," he said.

When in full operation, the project is expected to pay the government about $4 million in taxes. It employs at least a thousand people during the construction stage and is expected to generate jobs for 600 people during the mining operation.

CGA is listed on the Australian Stock Exchange and the Toronto Stock Exchange.

It also has controlling interests in the Segilola Gold Project in Nigeria and the Mkushi Project in Zambia.

CGA's entry into the Philippine mining industry was marked by its acquisition of Thistle Mining Inc.'s interest in the Masbate

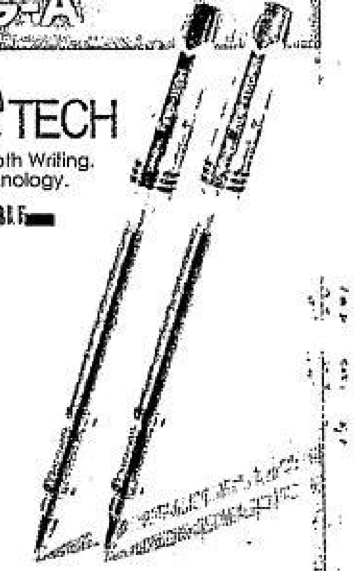
AUSSIE/ B5

Prime Orion Philippines, Inc.

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of *Prime Orion Philippines, Inc.* will be held on 20 December 2007 at 1:30 p.m. at the Balagtas and Garcia Villa Function Rooms, The Peninsula Manila, Makati City.

(Sgd.) Atty. Daisy L. Parker
Corporate Secretary



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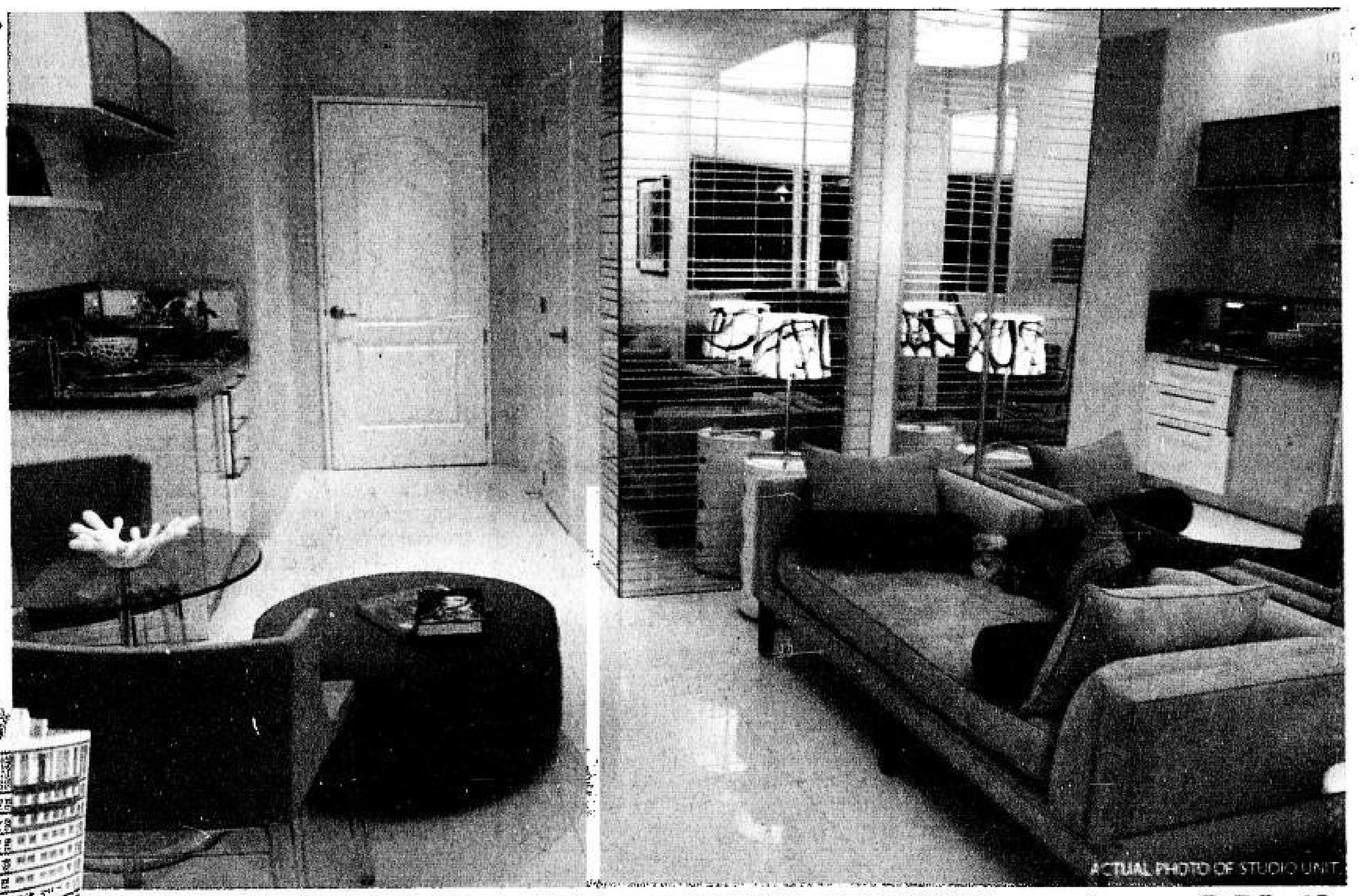

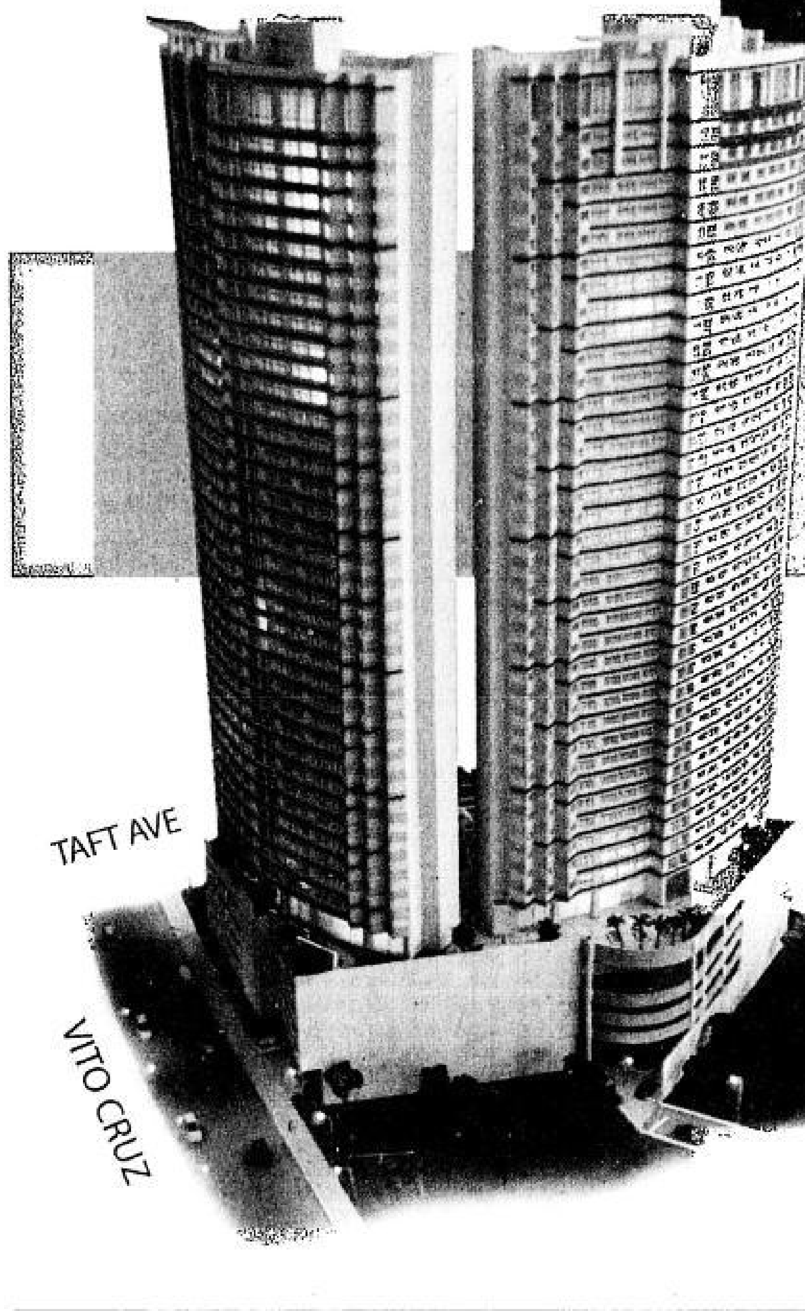

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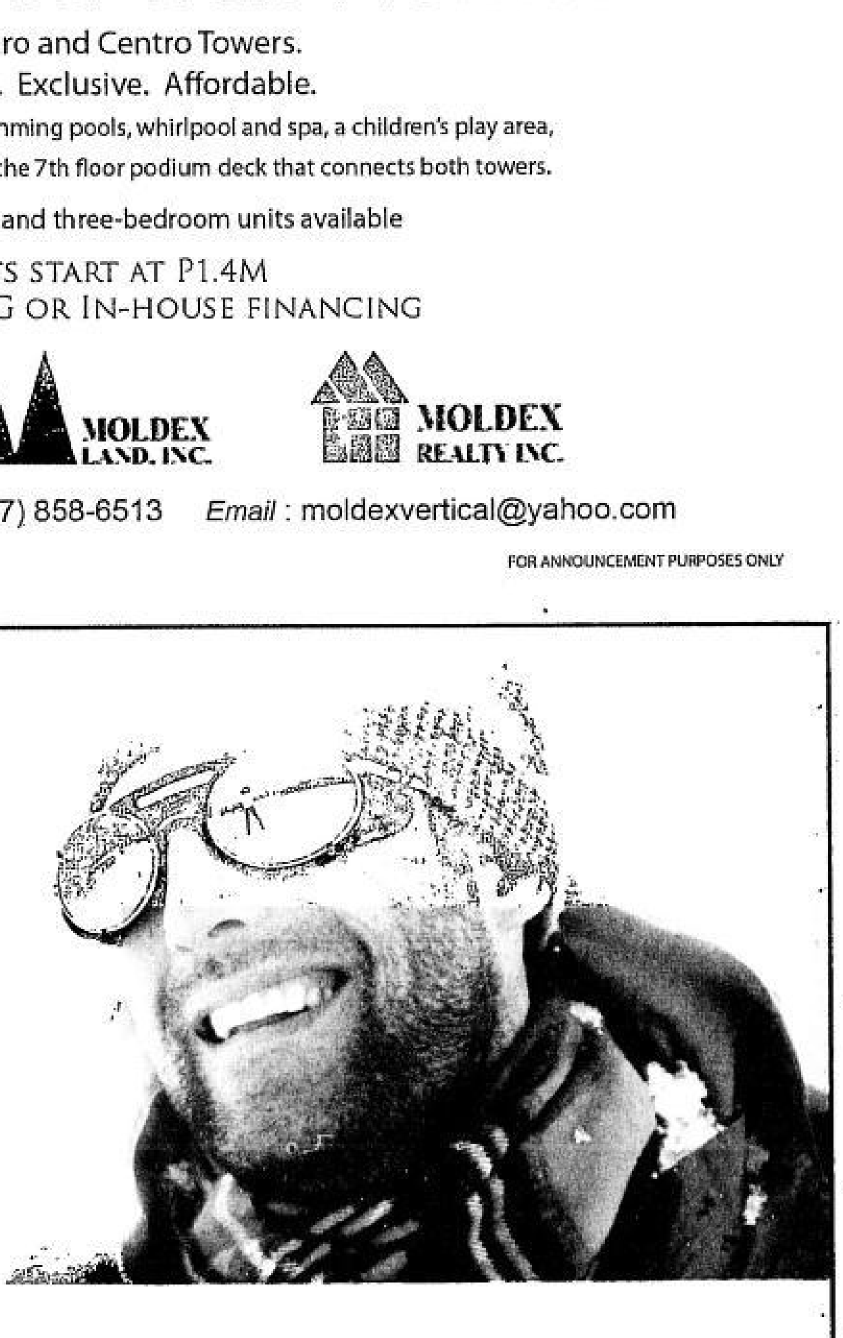

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Republic of the Philippines
HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION

INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS FOR NEGOTIATED SALE

The Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) is inviting interested parties to submit letters of intent to negotiate for the disposition of the property described below thru outright sale, installment, joint venture or other similar or variant schemes:

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY	LOCATION	TOTAL AREA (in sq.m.)
Ninety Nine (99) residential lots with individual TCTs (Partially Developed)	Divine Mercy Village, Brgy. Mationa, Tayabas, Quezon	12,894

1. The disposition and sale of the property shall be on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis;
2. For outright sale proposals, terms of payment may be in cash or installment;
3. Offers for joint venture should indicate the proposed terms, sharing scheme, duration of the project and schedule of projected sales.

HGC reserves the right to require additional information as it deems necessary to better understand and evaluate the offer(s).

Interested parties are encouraged to inspect the property before tendering their offers.

Details pertaining to the property as well as the guidelines for the negotiation can be obtained from the HGC's Asset Management and Disposition Group at the Jade Building (4th Floor), 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

For inquiries, please call the Asset Management Department at telephone nos. 897-32-86 & 897-32-90, or visit the HGC office at #335 Jade Building, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

THE CORPORATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL OFFERS, TO WAIVE ANY DEFECTS OR TO ACCEPT SUCH OFFER AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE CORPORATION.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL P. DE LOS SANTOS**
Vice President
Asset Management and Disposition Group

(PDI--Dec. 14 & 15, 2007)

LIGHT
RAIL
TRANSIT
AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

LRT LINE 1 NORTH EXTENSION PROJECT

1. The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) re-invites potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for the bidding of the Contract Package C. The funds have been provided for by the Government of Philippines (GOP). The Contracts shall be executed on a "Design-Build" Contract basis. The Contracts shall be executed on a "Design-Build" Contract basis.

Name of Contract	**Package C**
Location	**Metro Manila**
Brief Description	**Electro-Mechanical Works**
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	**Pesos 2.04 billion**
Contract Duration	**22 months**

2. Prospective Bidders should possess a Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) license applicable to the respective type and cost of the said contracts. Prospective Bidders should have completed a similar single contract with a value of at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) and should meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Applications for eligibility shall be evaluated on a pass/fail basis.
3. Bidding shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR – A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or entities with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines.
4. The Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) will issue Eligibility Documents to the prospective Bidders upon their submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI), and payment of a non-refundable fee of Twenty Five Thousand Pesos (PhP 25,000) to the Light Rail Transit Authority. Interested Bidders shall submit the duly accomplished Eligibility Documents to the SBAC at the address given below, on or before the deadline for receipt of Eligibility Documents. Only those bidders passing the Eligibility Check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.
5. The SBAC shall open the bids at the time, date and place specified. The SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall determine each Bidder's compliance with the documents required to be submitted for the Technical Proposal of the Bid, as prescribed in Instructions to Bidders of IRR-A. For this purpose, on the Day of Opening of Bid, the SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall check the submitted documents of each Bidder against a checklist of required documents to ascertain if they are all present in the first (Technical) envelope, using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. If a Bidder submits all required documents, it shall be rated "passed" for that particular requirement. In this regard, failure to submit a requirement, or an incomplete or patently insufficient submission, shall be considered "failed" for the particular requirement concerned. In case one or more of the above required documents in the first envelope of a particular Bid is missing, incomplete, or patently insufficient, the SBAC of the Light Rail Transit Authority shall rate the Bid concerned as "failed" and immediately return to the Bidder concerned its second (Financial) envelope unopened. Immediately after determining compliance with the requirements in the first bid envelope (Technical Proposal), the SBAC shall forthwith collect all the second bid envelopes (Financial Proposals) of the remaining complying bidders, whose first bid envelope was rated "passed" and seal them in a separate BOX in the presence of the Bidder's representatives of the complying bidders, who may also initial on the seal.
6. This being a **"Design – Build"** Contract, the second (Financial) envelope of the complying bidders shall be opened only after due evaluation for the responsiveness of the Technical Proposals and its compliance to the Performance Specifications/Employer's Requirements. The Date of Opening of the Financial Envelope shall be informed to all Bidders, whose Technical Proposal, after evaluation is found technically responsive and compliant to the Performance Specifications/Employer's Requirements. In the Financial Proposal (in the second envelope), in case one or more of the requirements of a particular bid is missing, incomplete or patently insufficient, and/or if the submitted total bid price exceeds the ABC, the SBAC shall rate the bid concerned as "failed." Bids that are determined to contain all the requirements for the second (Financial) envelope shall be rated "passed" and shall immediately be considered for detailed evaluation of the Financial Bids.
7. Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the contract. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.
8. The schedule for the various activities and the venue are as follows:

SBAC Activities	Package C
Receipt of Letter of Intent (LOI) and Issuance of Eligibility Documents	**8 AM to 5 PM, December 17 to 28, 2007** Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) Secretariat, Administration Building, Light Rail Transit Authority, LRTA Compound, Aurora Boulevard, Pasay City, 1300 Metro Manila, Philippines 9001.
Receipt of Eligibility Documents (Opening and deadline)	**9AM, January 15, 2008**
	Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC), Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City.
Issuance of Bid Documents	**8 AM to 5 PM, January 25, 2008**
Pre - bid Conference	**9AM, February 5, 2008**
Receipt of Technical and Financial Bids and opening of Technical Bids (Opening and deadline)	**9 AM, April 1, 2008**
	Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC), Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City.
Opening of Financial Bids	**9 AM, May 6, 2008** Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC), Light Rail Transit Authority, the Cafeteria, LRT Line 2 Depot, Marcos Highway, Pasig City.

9. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the Eligibility Check at the address given below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Fifty Thousand Pesos (PhP 50,000), to the Light Rail Transit Authority. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the Bidder or his authorized representative.
10. All Bids must be accompanied by Bid Security in the appropriate form and amount as specified in RA 9184 and the Bid Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
11. The Light Rail Transit Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process and to reject all Eligibility Documents or Bids, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

By authority of the SBAC Chairman:

(Sgd.) **ATTY. GREGORY P. PEREZ**
Member, Special Bids and Awards Committee
Administration Building, Light Rail Transit Authority, LRTA Compound,
Aurora Boulevard, Pasay City, 1300 Metro Manila, Philippines 9001
Telephone: +63-2-833-2466, Facsimile: +63-2-831-6449

(PDI--Dec. 15, 2007)

Gov't seized P2.7B worth of pirated goods as of Nov.

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE for Intellectual Property Rights yesterday reported that various government agencies have seized P2.7 billion worth of pirated products as of end-November.

According to Adrian S. Cristobal Jr., director general of lead agency Intellectual Property Office, concerted efforts to go after intellectual property right violators have led to the seizure of P5.25 billion of pirated goods since the NCIPR was set up in 2005.

Aside form the IPO, the committee also involves the Bureau of Customs, National Bureau of Investigation, Optical Media Board and the Philippine National Police.

The most common rip off products seized by these agencies include various optical media products and kits—related to movies and music—and branded apparel, fashion accessories, bags, cosmetics, perfumes, food, medicines, cleaning agents, software, computers, cable TV equipment, petroleum tanks, automobile parts and steel sheets.

From January to November this year, the BoC contributed the biggest share of the apprehended products in terms of value, yielding P1.09 billion.

At the same time, OMB chipped in P1.02 billion; PNP, P400.7 million; and NBI, P238 million.

"IP enforcement and institutional capacity-building are part of our two-pronged approach in strengthening the IPR regime of the country," Cristobal said.

The lawyer said fake products "threatened public health and safety as well as compete unfairly with legitimate businesses, cheat government of taxes, and weaken inventor confidence in our economy."

"Beyond the raids conducted for pirated intellectual property products, a sound IP environment of the country means tapping the creativity of the Filipinos, and to ensure that the IP system promotes innovation," Cristobal said.

He added that IP Philippines led the crafting of the recently launched national IP policy strategy aimed at fostering a competitive and creative country that uses IP as a strategic tool for national development.

Foreign chambers shun proposed changes in power industry reform act

By Abigail L. Ho

THE JOINT FOREIGN CHAMBERS in the Philippines has asked Congress to drop plans to amend the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 and instead channel its efforts to the implementation of the law.

In a statement issued yesterday, the group said the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. had already made great strides in fulfilling the two remaining requirements for the implementation of retail competition and open access, so there was really no need to amend the law at this time.

"Instead of amending these provisions of Epira at this time—while PSALM is working steadily to meet the legal preconditions for open access—interested parties in Congress, executive and private sector should continue to work to implement the Epira and to dialogue regarding alternative strategies to achieve the policy objective of open access and retail competition," the group said.

"This goal has long been desired by Philippine industry and foreign investors in order to make Philippine electric power prices more competitive," it added.

Before retail competition and open access can be implemented, the Epira mandates that five requirements be met.

These are the establishment and commercial operation of the wholesale electricity spot market, approval of unbundled transmission and distribution wheeling charges, implementation of the cross-subsidy removal scheme, privatization of 70 percent of the National Power Corp.'s Luzon and Visayas capacities, and transfer of 70 percent of Napocor capacity covered by independent power producer contracts to IPP administrators (IPPAs).

Only the first three requirements have been met so far.

"After a very slow start, the government agency created to implement the two above provisions, PSALM, has made very significant progress this year in selling the Napocor (generation assets), 43 percent of which were privatized as of November. Proceeds are being used to reduce Napocor's significant debt obligations. We encourage PSALM to continue its excellent performance and attain the 70-percent target in the first quarter of 2008," the group said.

"However, privatization of the IPP administrators has not begun. PSALM has promised to complete documents for the bidding of the Luzon IPP administrator by the first quarter of 2008. We should wait until then to see the results," it added.

In an earlier interview, PSALM president and chief executive Jose Ibazeta said the business model to be used by the IPPAs would be released by the first quarter of 2008.

The World Bank-funded study on the assignment of IPPAs had already been concluded, he said, and the business model to be used had been finalized.

"We target the release of the business model in the first quarter of next year. In fact, we have an investors' forum some time in January," he said.

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
PhilHealth Regional Office IV-A
AMCJ Square Building, Diversion Road, Brgy. Bocohan, Lucena City
Healthline (042) 373-6703-04 www.philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
No. 19-PB07

PUBLIC BIDDING FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF TWO YEARS LEASE CONTRACT FOR PRO IV-A MAIN OFFICE AND STORAGE BUILDING AT LUCENA CITY

The PhilHealth Regional Office IVA (PRO-IVA), through the Corporate Operating Budget (COB) 2007, intends to apply the sum of **PhP 6,575,284.80** as the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Procurement of Two Years Office Space Lease Contract for PRO IV-A Main Office and Storage Building at Lucena City. Said office space/building required shall have the following general specifications/descriptions:

1. The distance of nearest entrances between the proposed Office and Storage Space/Building shall not exceed fifteen (15) meters.
2. They shall be made of reinforced concrete.
3. The Office Space/Building frontage shall be located along the major road/s of the following places in Lucena City:
   - 3.1 City proper; it shall not be more than One Hundred Meters (100 m.) away from the regular routes of Public Utility Jeepneys plying Lucena City.
   - 3.2 Along Maharlika Highway starting from Gomez Street Extension to Apple and Peach Restaurant, Brgy. Kanlurang Mayao, Lucena City.
   - 3.3 Along Maharlika Highway starting from M.L. Tagarao Street to the junction connecting the Maharlika Highway and Diversion Road near Max's Restaurant at the boundary between Lucena City and Tayabas, Quezon.
   - 3.4 Along Doña Aurora Blvd. to Lucena Diversion Road.
   - 3.5 Along Lucena Diversion Road starting from Welmanville Subdivision, Brgy. Bocohan, to Lucena Grand Central Terminal, Brgy. Ibabang Dupay.
   - 3.6 Lucena Grand Central Terminal.
4. Presentable, ready to occupy; they shall be well-painted/finished, office space/building floors shall be ceramic tile-finished.
5. Office Space/building shall have a total area of One Thousand Thirty Five Square Meters (1,035 sq.m) having at least seven hundred fifty (750) square meters open space. It shall have a frontal dimension no less than twenty four (24) meters wide, which is divided into two: the main building, and a separate area having an area of seventy five to one hundred square meters (75-100 sq.m.).
The main building shall at least be sixteen (16) meters wide.
6. Storage space/building shall have a total area of at least Five Hundred Eighty Three Square Meters (583 sq. m.), with an office room of at least Eighteen Square Meters (18 sq. m.) but not more than Twenty Five Square Meters (25 sq. m.), and a comfort room of at least Three Square Meters (3 sq. m.) but not more than Six Square Meters (6 sq. m.). Proposals with an office/comfort room bigger than the herein prescribed limit shall be accepted provided that the excess area shall be given free.
7. Proposals having bigger areas than required herein (DELIVERABLES) shall be accepted provided that the excess area/s shall be given free of charge.

For detailed specifications/descriptions please contact our BAC Secretariat on the numbers stated below.

Rental Rate Limit :

Proposed Rental Rate shall not exceed Php180.00/sq.m. (Main Office Building)
Proposed Rental Rate shall not exceed Php128.00/sq.m. (Storage Building)

Escalation Rate shall not exceed 10% per year.

Approved Budget: Php 6, 575, 284.80

Bids received in excess of the **ABC** shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

PRO-IVA now invites sealed Bids from eligible bidders for the Public Bidding for the Procurement of Two Years Office Space Lease Contract for PRO IV-A Main Office and Storage Building at Lucena City. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using **non-discretionary pass/fail criteria** as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organization of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Bidding Documents. The bidder of the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the PRO-IVA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during **Mondays to Fridays, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., from December 6, 2007 to December 19, 2007.**
A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from **December 6, 2007 to December 19, 2007, Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **Six Thousand Pesos (Php 6,000.00)**. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
PRO-IVA will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **December 18, 2007, 1:00 p.m.** at the Conference Room of the office address below.

Bids and Eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **January 3, 2008, 10:00 a.m.** Late bids shall not be accepted. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following forms and amount:

Forms of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid	Amount of Bid Security
Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)	Php 65,752.85
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1 ½%)	Php 98,629.27
Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2 ½%)	Php 164,382.12
Foreign Government Guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)	Php 6,575,284.80

Bid opening shall be on **January 3, 2008, 10:15 a.m.** at the Conference Room of PRO-IVA. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The official time clock shall be the wall clock at the conference room entrance.

PRO-IVA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

PhilHealth Regional Office – IVA
BENJIE A. CUVINAR / CECILIA I. PUREZA (BAC Secretarials)
AMCJ Square Bldg., Diversion Road, Brgy. Domoit, Lucena City
Tel.No.(042)373-7782
Facsimile No. (042)373-6936
e-mail address: admin.pro4a@philhealth.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **MIGUEL T. MACALINAO**
Charperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – December 08 & 15, 2007)

1st phase of La Union airport upgrade seen completed in January

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BASES CONVERSION DEVELOPMENT Authority is expecting to complete in January 2008 the initial phase of the P500-million upgrade of the San Fernando Airport at Poro Point in La Union.

Anthony C. Manguiat, vice president and chief operation officer of BCDA unit Poro Point Management Corp., said the airport had seen a 30-percent increase in passenger traffic in October even amid the ongoing upgrade.

Poro Point, one of several former military facilities that the government is converting to productive civilian use, is being positioned as an alternative tourism destination to Macau.

Manguiat said the upgrading involved the widening of the runway, overlay of the taxiway, leveling of a hill, construction of a new control tower, renovation of a fire station, fencing the perimeter, excavation of ditches and channels.

He said the removal of the hill was now 60 percent complete, which would help extend the runway by 480 meters to 2.1 kilometers.

A longer runway would allow the airport to accommodate larger aircraft like the Airbus 320 and Boeing 737.

Classified as a second airport that serves as an alternate to the Loakan Airport in Baguio City, San Fernando can only serve turboprop aircraft and the C-130 cargo plane of the Air Force.

According to Manguiat, available data showed that 2,039 private planes as well as two military and one government aircraft used the San Fernando Airport in October.

"(An upgraded airport) would complement the existing international seaport to help make Poro Point an ideal site for commerce and tourism," he said.

Aside from the ports, Poro Point also hosts an industrial zone and an entertainment center.

The official explained that the long-term plan was to position Poro Point as a regional gateway to Northern Luzon, considering its location allows easy access to the beaches of Ilocandia and the resort city of Baguio as well as the Hundred Islands in Pangasinan and the pilgrimage areas of Aggo and Manaoag.

"We expect passenger and cargo traffic to further increase once the airport improvements are completed," Maguiat said. "Several flying schools have already signified intention to locate in the airport."

Aussie firm invests $58M in RP ...

From page B3

Gold Project in March 2007.

The project is co-owned by Filipino firm Filminera Resources Corp. under a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement and Mineral Processing Permit.

The project's feasibility study was approved by the Mines and Geosciences Bureau early this year.

With estimated gold reserves of 71.3 million tons, proponents of the project are looking at a daily production rate of 12,000 metric tons of ore.

In the same statement, Quinto said Michael J. Carrick, president and chief executive of CGA Mining Ltd., had commended the Philippine government for its "professionalism and transparency, which enabled the firm to fast-track mining operations in Masbate without delay and without corruption."

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Please be informed that **Asiatrust Development Bank** has terminated, effective **August 2007**, its tie-up agreement with **Gift & Parcel** as its collecting agent abroad. For which reason, any and all subsequent payments coursed thru Gift & Parcel after this notice shall no longer be honored.

All **SSS Members** who had been issued Special Bank Receipts (SBRs) by Gift & Parcel prior to this notice are hereby requested to surrender the said SBRs to any nearest SSS branch offices for immediate settlement.

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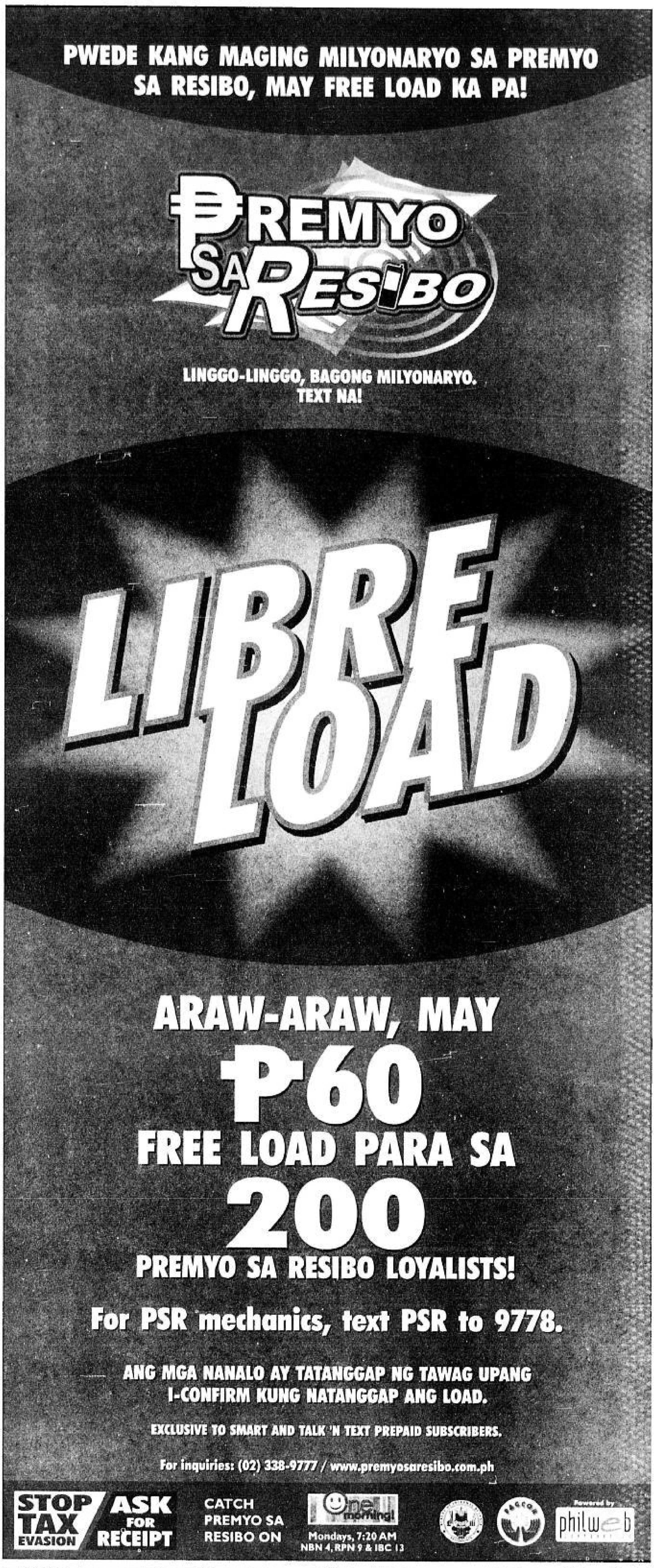

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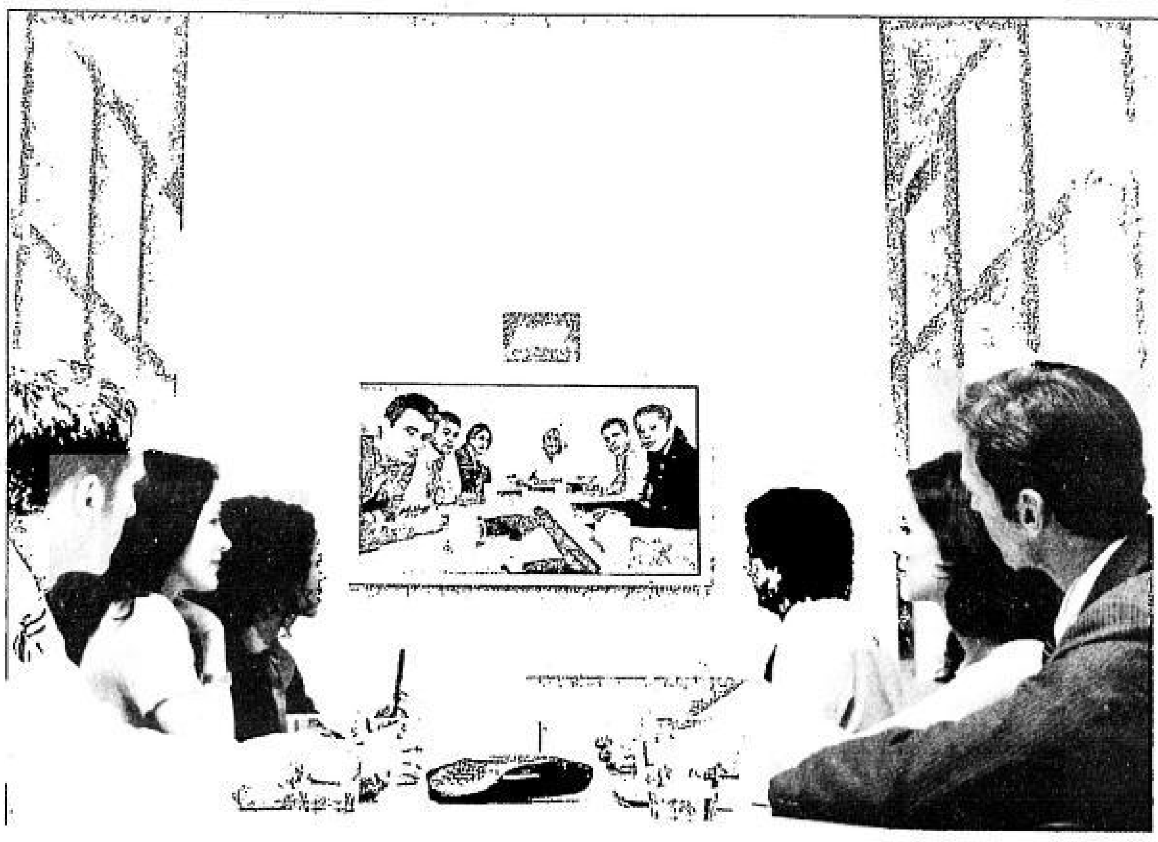

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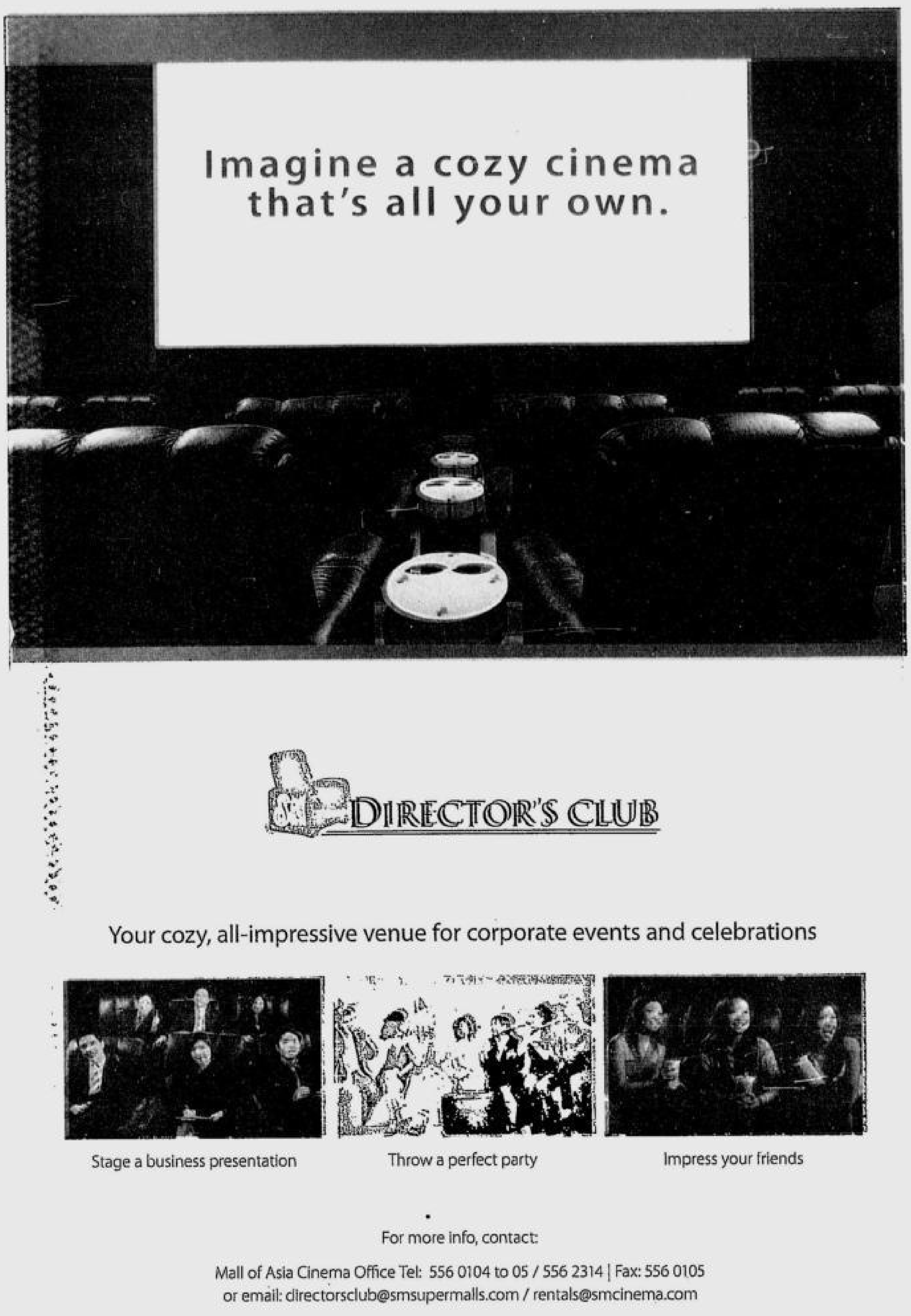

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Atlas to start copper production in Cebu

By Amy R. Remo

WITH THE $200-MILLION REHABILITATION of its Cebu copper mine on track, Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. yesterday said it could start production of the first batch of copper concentrates for export by the middle of 2008.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Atlas said that, for the next decade, production at the Toledo copper mine will average some 47,000 tons of contained copper a year.

Approximately 3,600 personnel have been hired by Atlas subsidiary, Carmen Copper Corp., to work at its Toledo Copper mine, which is well advanced in its rehabilitation program.

With the progress of the mine's rehabilitation activities, Atlas' board of directors had also approved the further infusion of funds worth about $6.55 million into the Toledo Mining project through Atlas' subscription to additional Carmen Copper shares.

Atlas noted that all its rehabilitation/reconstruction activities are done inhouse—from the fabrication of the flotation cells at the processing plants to repairs and reconstruction of the port facilities.

Waste stripping at the South Lutopan Pit is ongoing, with materials moved averaging at 73,500 tons a day, exceeding the programmed waste stripping of 55,000 tons a day.

It is expected that ore will be exposed earlier than planned, thus ensuring the availability of ore materials as soon as the concentrator is ready to process ore.

Atlas hopes to begin ore processing by July 2008, at an initial capacity of 20,000 tons a day, which will increase to its maximum capacity of 42,000 tons a day by the third quarter of 2009.

The mining firm added that the advance waste stripping is mainly due to the acquisition of a new fleet of Komatsu surface mining equipment and the supervision of experienced open pit mine staff who had been working at the same mine for decades.

At the mine underground, preparatory works for the underground de-watering work is ongoing and well within schedule, according to Atlas.

All these activities, including the construction of the new tailings disposal system which involves the driving of a 1.8-kilometer tunnel, are expected to be completed by June 2008.

Shares down 2.4%

From page B1

to soothe investors—including a 25-basis point cut in interest rates—is also keeping local players cautious, they added.

The composite index fell 87.52 points to 3,538.69, its lowest level for the day.

The all-share index fell 45.07 points to 2,176.41.

Decliners overwhelmed advancers 106 to 23, while 40 stocks were unchanged.

Volume totaled 1.8 billion shares valued at P4.2 billion ($102.4 million).

"After the US Fed meeting, there is no major catalyst to look forward to," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

"Investors became extra cautious after the main index slipped below the key 3,600-point level," said Rommel Macapagal, chairman of Westlink Global Equities. *AFP*

Jan-Oct OFW remittances…

From page B1

traction among sea-based workers.

The data showed that the number of deployed land-based workers rose by 10.7 percent to 64,066 in October, while the number of sea-based workers contracted by 10.7 percent to 23,992.

"According to the POEA, the decline in the number of sea-based workers was traced partly to the delay in the workers' visa issued by host countries and to the increasing competition posed by workers from other countries," Tetangco said.

"Nonetheless, the increase in the deployment of land-based workers in October moderated the year-to-date contraction to only 1.1 percent to reach 915,333."

The BSP report on remittances does not include funds coursed through informal channels, defined as unlicensed or unregulated operations, such as friends, acquaintances or other travelers. However, this so-called leakage in the remittance pipeline has gone down to only 5 percent of total inflows from as high as 30 percent three years ago.

An earlier study on the Mexican experience showed that remittances held as deposits in the banking system were two to three times more beneficial than those coursed through other channels. It showed that funds deposited in banks could be used as investments in businesses.

The BSP is promoting the use of formal banking channels as a safer and more productive cash remittance system for millions of Filipinos working abroad.

Over the last 10 years, remittances from overseas Filipinos has grown at a compounded annual rate of 11 percent, accounting for about 10 percent of total economic output.

Peso closes …

From page B1

said the BSP would likely cut its overnight borrowing rate by another 25 basis points next week and in early 2008.

"The Philippines is on a roll: GDP (gross domestic product) rose over 7 percent in the first three quarters of this year, with more of the same to come," Neumann said.

"The peso, shedding much of its historic stigma, has been among the best performers in Asia this year, rising an impressive 16 percent against the US dollar," he said.

While the Philippine economy remained supported by surging remittances, fueling a consumption boom that might be difficult to sustain, Neumann said the fiscal deficit—the economy's point of vulnerability for so long—had almost vanished and lent some economic stability.

To temper peso …

From page B1

of the dollars they receive.

The rise in the peso was attributed to the increase in dollar inflows, including remittances and foreign investments.

While the rise of the peso has its adverse effects, it also has an upside—it tempers inflation. A strong peso keeps the inflationary environment benign despite rising prices of oil in the world market.

The Department of Finance earlier said measures were being prepared to temper the rise of the peso and ease the ill effects on OFWs.

One of the measures is the reduction in the charges slapped by government financial institutions on remittances.

The DOF also said it would revise the government's borrowing mix next year to 70:30 in favor of domestic sources of loans, from the originally planned 64:36.

Roaming to the 10th Power

Ten thankful reasons for PLDT WeRoam...plus one more.

By Walter Ray Choi

If there's one thing I've noticed about the WeRoam phenomenon it's the fact that more than a product or service, it spans an entirely new culture. For people like you and me who've discovered even more productivity working out of the office, WeRoam is always in a state of improvement and reinvention. I'll call it a "happy flux", where things only go up into a new defining set of standards.

Beyond taking the first tentative steps into being a truly mobile workforce, we're now so fully immersed that plainly, we really can't think of working without it. From novelty to indispensable tool; what a road it's been. From where I work (which honestly, is quite anywhere nowadays), WeRoam is unassailable on the power of ten points.

1-2-3

WeRoam's "unlimited internet" access is truer to the hype given the fact that it runs on not one or even two networks, but three. In addition to Airborne's WiFi Hotspots (access up to 2Mbps) and SMART's 3G/HSDPA (speeds of up to 1.8Mbps), it also gives you the GPRS/EDGE network (up to 140kbps) which enjoys the "always on" reputation based on real customer experiences.

The 600

The power of partnerships is heavily in your favour here. On your own, it would cost an additional P1,000 a month to get an unlimited WiFi hotspot. Airborne's 600-plus hotspots are yours to use with no further cost.

When is an hour actually an hour?

No billing surprises here. With true unlimited access at a fixed rate, your eyes stay on your downloaded content and off the clock.

A year of bliss

WeRoam doesn't lock you into an overly long term of commitment. PLDT gives you the flexibility for just one year. Personally for me though, I opt for more.

Text away

As far as I know only WeRoam offers reliable SMS right from your laptop.

International Roaming

True global citizens work in all global arenas so WeRoam doesn't see any reason for you to stop enjoying its service once you hop a plane. WeRoam of course has the most number of roaming partners.

My email

WeRoam is the total package that includes your own free email account.

Virus-free

Still another part of the total package is free bundled anti-virus software, especially useful for relative laptop-maintenance slobs like me.

All I want for Christmas...

Is a new laptop, courtesy of easy WeRoam laptop bundles.

More than one way to WeRoam

The kicker? WeRoam's postpaid fixed monthly rate for all this wireless internet value is just P1,500. And just to top it all, WeRoam 3G prepaid kits are finally even more available than ever before.

What lies ahead is even more exciting. Next week we look at the WeRoam phenomenon as it spreads over the virtual gated community of Appleheads---the Mac users who guard their tribe with the devotion of zealots as well as increasingly sophisticated PC users, specifically Dell customers who enjoy unprecedented streamlining with WeRoam "built-in" right into their laptops with no additional hardware necessary.

Throughout the brief but revolutionary two years of the WeRoam phenomenon, we've been repeatedly asked; are we ready for the next change? I think it's safe to say that more than answering "yes", we've grown to righteously demand it.

Oil prices recover

SINGAPORE—OIL CLIMBED in thin trade on Friday, after falling sharply a day ago on concerns about the US economy, the strengthening dollar and the market's failure to break above a key resistance level.

US light sweet crude for January rose 45 cents to $92.70 a barrel by early yesterday afternoon after falling by $2.14 a day ago, halving gains from Wednesday when the market was buoyed by a US oil stock draw and a global central bank cash injection.

Oil prices touched a two-week high of $94.85 a barrel on Wednesday and Thursday, which may have triggered the reversal.

"We have been feeling that there seems to be quite heavy resistance at $95 at the moment, we failed to break above it for two days, which is why people may have taken profits," said Tetsu Emori, a fund manager at Astmax Futures Co. Ltd. in Tokyo.

Fears that the problems in credit markets could push the United States into a recession have roiled financial markets in recent weeks. This week's fresh moves by the US Federal Reserve and other major central banks, aimed at restoring confidence to world credit markets, failed to sweep the concerns away.

News of a faster-than-expected 1.2 percent rise in November US retail sales also did little to assuage those worries.

Oil jumped nearly 5 percent on Wednesday, pushing back toward its $99.29 record high after several range-bound weeks below $90, with tight global supplies and strong economic growth in developing nations such as China lending support.

US crude oil inventories fell last week to their lowest level since March 2005, while stocks of distillates, which include heating oil, dropped 800,000 barrels, the US government said. *Reuters*

Credit worries hit Asian stocks

Financial issues bear brunt of impact; yen sags

SYDNEY—A CREDIT RATINGS DOWNGRADE for US banking giant Citigroup sent Asian financial stocks skidding more than 2 percent on Friday, while the yen sagged after Japanese business sentiment dropped to two-year lows.

European stocks, however, were expected to rebound from a bruising sell-off in the previous session with financial bookmakers expecting gains of up to 0.9 percent for the three major stock indexes.

Copper fell almost 2 percent in Shanghai, and oil traded near $92.50 a barrel after Thursday's $2 fall as investors fretted that slower US growth would take a toll on demand.

Gold was steadier near $800 an ounce after a 2-percent fall.

Developments overnight were a mixed bag for investors with solid US retail sales helping ease fears that the world's biggest economy was sliding into a recession.

But a ratings downgrade for Citi by Moody's and warnings from Lehman Brothers about further write-downs due to the credit market crisis highlighted the ongoing threat to financial companies from the subprime mortgage meltdown.

"This is nasty stuff ... and everybody who has been saying that things are fine, they were living in a dreamland. This has got truckloads to playout," said Paul Biddle, a portfolio manager with Souls Funds Management in Sydney.

Investors also had to cope with the Bank of Japan's (BOJ) December tankan survey, which showed business sentiment in the world's second biggest economy falling to two-year lows, prompting investors to push back expectations of a BOJ rate hike further into 2008.

Tokyo's Nikkei average ended 0.1 percent lower, extending Thursday's 2.5 percent drop, while MSCI's measure of other Asia Pacific stocks slid 1.3 percent to two-week lows by early yesterday afternoon, falling for a third session.

The MSCI index is down about 11 percent from the Nov. 1 record high but still up 32.3 percent this year, outpacing a 10.2 percent gain for MSCI's key world stock index.

Banks dropped across the region, pushing MSCI's index for Asian financial stocks down as much as 2.6 percent to a 2-½ week low at one stage. The index was down 2.1 percent in afternoon trade.

Moody's action on Citi deepened the gloom on a sector already hit by disappointment over the Federal Reserve's modest 25 basis point rate cut this week and doubts about a global plan to tackle the credit problem.

Australia's top investment bank, Macquarie Group, slipped 1.3 percent, Japan's biggest bank Mitsubishi UFJ fell 4.8 percent and South Korea's top lender Kookmin Bank slid 3.4 percent.

Resource stocks were also under pressure on concerns that slower global growth will crimp demand for their products. BHP Billiton lost 2.8 percent, while energy firm Inpex Holdings fell 3.3 percent.

The tankan report coupled with strong US retail sales and producer prices data helped propel the dollar to a one-month high of about 112.65 yen

The euro also firmed against the Japanese currency, rising to 164.65 yen from the overnight low of 163.57 yen, and climbed to $1.4641, off Thursday's low of about $1.4575.

"Some have expected a possible rate hike by the Bank of Japan in February, but I don't think the BOJ can raise interest rates during the current business year after today's weak tankan results," said Takeshi Minami, chief economist at Norinchukin Research Institute. *Reuters*

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2. Duplex Wire #1/0	20,000 meters
3. Bare Ware, ACSR # 2/0	20,000 meters

Please submit bids/proposals for the supply and delivery of the above items on or before 2:00 PM (1400 hrs.) on December 20, 2007 (Thursday) at CENPELCO main office wherein your bid will be opened in your presence or that of your representative/s.

Request further to include in your sealed bids/proposals the delivery date, terms of payment, availability of stock, warranty period and brand for evaluation purposes. Bid for one or two items only is acceptable. Please submit BID BOND equivalent to two and one-half percent (2-1/2%) of the total bid price if it is a cash or manager's check or if it is a surety bond it must be equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. Bids/proposals submitted beyond the specified date and time will not be accepted.

CENPELCO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPTS THE BIDS ONLY DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) RODRIGO F. CORPUZ
PBAC Chairman

Noted by:
(Sgd.) JOSEFINA D. MANDAPAT
General Manager

(PDI – December 15 & 16, 2007)

NEW OFFICE and residential buildings are almost completed in the so-called central business district of Beijing. China's urban fixed asset investment rose 26.8 percent in the first 11 months of 2007 compared with a year earlier, the National Bureau of Statistics said with overall urban fixed investment—a key measure of spending on infrastructure projects—for the period was 10.1 trillion yuan ($1.4 trillion), the bureau said in a statement. AFP

AFP RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION BENEFITS SYSTEM
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
Republic of the Philippines
AFP-Retirement & Separation Benefits System

Preparation of Feasibility Study, Socio-Economic Benefit-Cost Study and Development Maps and Plans for Lots located in Brgy. Calubcob, Silang, Cavite

1. The **AFP RETIREMENT AND SEPARATION BENEFITS SYSTEM (AFP-RSBS)**, through ***the Budget approved by its Board of Trustees*** intends to apply the sum of **Two Hundred Thousand Pesos (P200,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the ***Preparation of Feasibility Study, Socio-Economic Benefit-Cost Study and Development Maps and Plans for Lots located in Brgy. Calubcob, Silang, Cavite.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected on the day of the opening of the financial proposals.
2. The AFP-RSBS now calls for the submission of ***Letters of Intent (LOIs)*** from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and short listing for the ***Preparation of Feasibility Study, Socio-Economic Benefit-Cost Study and Development Maps and Plans for Lots located in Brgy. Calubcob, Silang, Cavite.*** Interested consultants must submit their LOIs on or before ***December 27, 2007*** at the ***BAC Secretariat Office, AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City*** and secure the Eligibility Documents therefrom. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on ***January 10, 2008*** at the ***BAC Secretariat Office***, The date of the opening of Eligibility Documents shall be on ***January 11, 2008*** at the ***AFP-RSBS Boardroom, 424 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.*** Only those that are short listed will be entitled to submit bids.
3. The BAC shall draw up the short list of consultants from those who have submitted ***LOIs*** and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The short list of prospective bidders shall consist of ***five (5)*** consultants. The criteria and rating system for short listing are:

ITEM	WEIGHT RATING SCORE
I. APPLICABLE EXPERIENCE (50%)	
a) Completed consulting services of size, complexity and technical specialty comparable to job under consideration including quality of performance	(30%)
b) Other completed consulting services related to the job under consideration	(10%)
c) Known cases of prior performance, including quality of work conforming to obligations and costs of services	(10%)
II. QUALIFICATION OF PERSONNEL (30%)	
Qualification of the key personnel that may be assigned to the job	(30%)
III. JOB CAPACITY (20%)	
Current workload relative to capacity	(20%)

4. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and only bids from short listed consultants will be opened. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

   The PROCURING ENTITY shall evaluate bids using the ***Quality-Cost Based Evaluation (QCBE)*** procedure. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
5. Interested consultants may obtain further information from the ***AFP-RSBS*** at the address given below from ***8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday.***

AFP-RSBS Bids and Awards Committee
AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Avenue
Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
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6. The contract shall be completed within one hundred twenty (120) calendar days.
7. The AFP-RSBS reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to the contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) **MICHAEL A. SANCHEZ**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – December 08 & 15, 2007)

US inflation up by biggest margin in 34 yrs

WASHINGTON—A RECORD JUMP in gasoline prices pushed up US wholesale inflation in November at the fastest pace in more than three decades, while retail sales showed unexpected strength.

The Labor Department said Thursday that wholesale prices rose by 3.2 percent last month, the biggest increase in 34 years.

The jump reflected a 34.8 percent surge in gasoline prices. Outside of energy and food, core inflation posted a 0.4 percent jump, double what was expected.

But in more upbeat economic news, the Commerce Department reported that retail sales increased by a better-than-expected 1.2 percent last month.

It was the biggest sales advance in six months and evidence of widespread strength in a number of areas, from department stores to clothing shops and furniture stores.

On Wall Street, stocks posted a modest gain, rising by 44.06 points to close at 13,517.96.

Economists said the retail sales gain should ease concerns the economy is about to tumble into a recession, although they said overall growth in the current quarter is still likely to be weak given the headwinds battering consumers.

Those troubles include the slump in housing, a severe credit crunch and surging energy costs.

All of these problems have pushed consumer confidence down to the lowest point in two years, leading economists to forecast a subpar performance by holiday shoppers this year.

The big jump in wholesale prices was worrisome, economists said, because it was not limited to energy. That suggests that the relentless surge in energy prices could be spreading into more widespread inflation, something that would raise alarm bells at the Federal Reserve.

"I think the Fed has some worries on inflation," said David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's in New York. "We are starting to see some leakage from energy into other areas of the economy."

White House press secretary Dana Perino said one bad report on inflation "doesn't make a trend."

"Inflation has remained remarkably low, even in the face of high energy prices," Perino said. "We're confident that chair Bernanke takes price stability seriously and considers the risk of inflation in the Fed's policy decisions."

The Fed, struggling to get credit flowing again and to ward off a downturn, cut a key interest rate this week for the third time this year. The Fed also announced a global effort with other central banks to pump fresh cash into the banking system.

Wyss said the stronger-than-expected November retail sales performance would probably cause analysts to lift their forecasts for overall growth in the October-to-December quarter to slightly above 1 percent. *AP*

Japanese business confidence lowest in more than 2 years

TOKYO—CONFIDENCE AT JAPANESE companies fell to its lowest in more than two years, a closely-watched Bank of Japan survey showed Friday, amid rising anxiety about a possible slowdown in the US economy and recent market turmoil.

The quarterly "tankan" survey's sentiment index for large manufacturers fell from 23 in September to 19, below the 21 mark predicted by analysts and the lowest score since September 2005.

A similar index for large non-manufacturers in the survey, which polls more than 10,000 companies nationwide, fell to 16 from 20.

The indices measure the percentage of companies reporting positive business conditions minus those who are negative.

A decline in the numbers means a growing portion of companies are pessimistic.

Analysts said the results, along with recent sluggish growth figures, suggest the central bank will hold off from raising interest rates as it gauges the US economy—a key export market—and fallout from the subprime mortgage crisis.

Japan's benchmark interest rate was raised to 0.5 percent in February.

"The possibility of a rate hike in the near future, which was slim to begin with, have declined further given the results of this report," Lehman Brothers economist Hiroshi Shiraishi said in a note published Friday.

Japanese Economy Minister Hiroko Ota said the tankan's results did not change her view that Japan's economy was on an upward trend, but said the government would keep an eye on risks, including high oil prices and possible weaker demand from American consumers.

In some positive news, the quarterly survey showed that major companies plan to boost capital investment by 10.5 percent in fiscal 2007, higher than the 8.7 percent increase in September's estimate.

Last week, the government said the economy grew at an annual pace of just 1.5 percent, worse than a preliminary estimate of 2.6 percent, due to a a downward revision in capital expenditure figures.

The tankan's results spurred traders to sell the yen, driving the dollar to 112.46 yen in early afternoon trade from 112.21 yen overnight in New York.

But the stock market largely shrugged off the results, with the benchmark Nikkei 225 index up 0.6 percent to finish morning trade at 15,632.72. *AP*

New Geox business concept debuts in Germany; immediately wins prize

THE NEW GEOX SHOP DEBUTED Nov. 22 in Frankfurt, the first in Germany based on the new retail concept. A winning concept which at Mapic-the world's most important real estate event-was assigned the prestigious Mapic Award for the clothing/fashion and retail category. The award was assigned by an international panel that recognized to Geox the extraordinary store concept and ambitious expansion.

With 300 sqm, the Frankfurt shop represents the biggest Geox store in Europe, and is an ideal location that would contribute to enhance Geox products-from the traditional to the new clothing line and even further-for a "breathing total look".

Like traditional stores, the Frankfurt store has been designed to be easier for customers to use and closer to their needs.

A lot of attention has been paid to the children's collection, a real colored island within the store: walls with panels painted in various colors and shoes hanging from the walls make this environment even more cheerful and lively.

The store furnishings are quite minimal, capturing that sought-after simplicity that distinguishes all Geox products. The environment is spacious and luminous, the result of a sophisticated play of lights that highlight the white in the tiles.

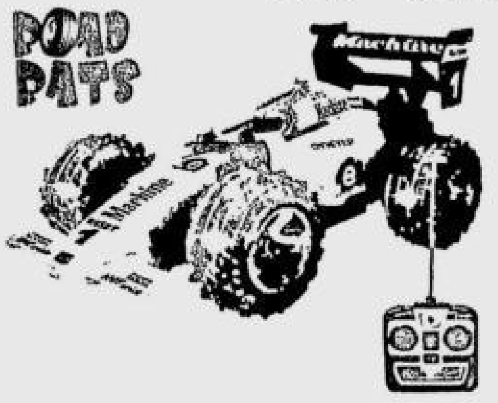
The walls are covered with dark panels that create an agreeable visual contrast with the white sail, the hallmark of all Geox stores, designed to give maximum visibility to its collections.

All the furniture is flexible and modular so it can be moved and adapted to the new seasonal collections and to ever new and diverse creative solutions.

Moreover, huge plasma screens will project Geox videos, combining innovation, technology and creativity, and favoring the interaction between the consumer and the surrounding environment.

After Italy, the German market is the biggest in Europe for Geox with turnover in the first 9 months of the year amounting to more than 87 million.

For the kuyas of the house



ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAY VACATION AND bond with brothers and friends with the latest models of Battle B-Daman Firespirits shooting toys. Feel what it's like to be B-da champion Yamato Delgado as you personally get into the high tech action game against your rivals. You'll surely enjoy the Firespirits journey as you try to defeat powerful opponents, and as you meet B-Daman parts that have been never heard of before.

But if practicing in solitude is your game, Bio Bytes Game T-Rex could be your best Christmas present ever. In this handy, battery-operated, infrared gaming machine, you can let your T-rex grow-and you can eventually let him compete with other T-Rex's in town. No wires needed to be able to compete; instantly link through the Infrared for an ultimate gaming experience.

And if you've been trapped in adoration for the fabulous five Japanese heroes, then Power Ranger Mystic Force (PRMF) is for you. Now all improved and made for the Western audience, PRMF's toys might even make you want to promise higher grades for the coming year! Choose from Megazords, weapons, vehicles, action figures from the PRMF collection and let our well-loved super heroes take you to their magical adventures.

You can also get on a road rage with Road Rats, a line of remote-controlled toy vehicles for kids (and even adults!) With an easy operating and a powerful suspension system, Road Rats have race cards such as Rally, Scaled Buggy, Formula One and the latest craze, the Turbo twister Stunt Vehicle.

And if you want our champion Pokemons, who says you'll have a hard time to 'catch 'em all?' With the new carry-anywhere Get Aim Pon shooting game, surely you won't have to miss any of our Pokemon buddies. Play with as many brothers or relatives as you want, just make sure you take turns in shooting your opponents.

Avon unveils first-ever celebrity fragrance-Angel Locsin Wish of Happiness

Angel Locsin
wish of happiness

Avon's first celebrity-branded perfume is Angel Locsin Wish of Happiness, available this December.

THE EPITOME OF BEAUTY, TALENT, AND grace, Angel Locsin has been captivating hearts all over the country. Luminous in all her roles, Angel is even more dazzling offscreen, chasing her dreams and supporting those of her family's with sincere joy and excitement. The young star leads a life so vibrant and full of love-from family, friends, and fans-that she can wish for nothing more than to inspire others to enjoy their lives to the fullest.

Inspired by the young star's zest for life and generous spirit, Avon unveils a refreshing new fragrance this December. From the country's No. 1 fragrance house comes Angel Locsin Wish of Happiness. The global beauty company's first-ever celebrity perfume is a fruity-floral eau de toilette that captures the young star's joie de vivre in a bottle.

Wish of Happiness blends key notes of pink grapefruit, sweet lemon, pear, and orange blossom, resulting in a youthful and lighthearted scent that will delight today's free-spirited young women.

A steal at the purse-friendly price of P800 for every 50ml, Avon's latest perfume makes the perfect gift this season of cheer. And with the introductory price of only P399 through your local Avon Lady, Angel Locsin Wish of Happiness truly excites and uplifts, like the beauty whose signature is engraved on each elegant bottle.

Glam and glitz of Targus

TARGUS, LEADING GLOBAL SUPplier of mobile computing cases and accessories, is proud to offer the ladies new bags perfect for the lifestyle you lead and love! Go chic with our Targus Milan and Paris Bags.

Targus Milan Case fits laptops with up to 14" screens. It has an interior quilted padding to provide protection for your laptop against damage when you carry it anywhere. Targus Milan Case is fabricated with durable and superior polyester and koskin. It has a slip pocket in the main compartment for files or documents, and a detachable zipper pouch for makeup and other accessories. It's available in two colors: black and beige.

Targus Paris Case fits laptops with up to 14" screens. It has an interior quilted padding to provide your laptop protection against damage when you carry it anywhere. Its specially designed zippered pocket with protective lining provides safe storage of MP3, PDA or mobile phone so your gadgets are protected against scratches. IT has a detachable zipper pouch for makeup and other accessories. It's also available in two colors: black and beige.

Targus products are exclusively distributed in the Philippines by MSI-ECS. For more information and pricing, call Vins Chua at 688-3732, e-mail vchua@msi-ecs.com.ph, or log on to www.msi-ecs.com.ph.

Paris Case beige and black

Saint Honore : Get The Paris Style

Monceau Automatic Open Dial

Haussman Magnum

Haussman Magnum n°2

An evocative name, the perfect combination of Swiss made watches with a Paris signature.

It's a legendary Parisian address, temple of haute couture, home of the world's great jewellers and watchmakers, and a symbol of French art de vivre; it was the Rue Saint Honore, Paris' fashion and style centre, that inspired the name. It is in the heart of Paris that Saint Honore chose to open its flagship store at number 326 in the street that echoes the name of the brand. Not only does 326, rue Saint-Honore mark a new point in the history of the brand, but is also marks the first step in creating a permanent home in which to discover the new.

For over a century, SAINT HONORE has been synonymous with the world-famous "Paris Style", and has created collections of unrivalled design. From Paris to New York, and Tokyo to Dubai, the brand's exceptional watchmaking expertise exerts an irresistible attraction on those who love contemporary pieces. With "Swiss made" quality, a unique spirit, high-status materials and bold finishes, SAINT HONORE offers watches, that reflect and interpret today's desires. These beautifully-crafted pieces combine the timeless elegance of the French capital with the luxury of its most beautiful landmarks.

As Paris sets lovers dreaming, so the creations of Saint Honore fill the dreams of lovers…of beautiful watches. The Saint Honore Collection is built around 6 central product lines, each with its own distinct personality, from chic to glamour, fashion, sporty or Art Deco.

Haussman Magnum - A Stylish Masterpiece

Strength, character, and innovation are the hallmarks of the very latest SAINT HONORE model. First and foremost, the name Haussman draws its name from the founder of Paris. Then its shape audaciously round, with a wealth of technical features: 45mm 2 tone case combining black PVD and 18k pink gold plating, carbon dial, sapphire crystal, black rubber strap with deploying buckle. And last but not the least, its <<engine>>, an ETA chronograph movement with very advanced retrograde functions. The result will satisfy lovers of daring elegance.

P94,500

Monceau - The Shape of Elegance

For this completely new model, SAINT HONORE, has revisited one of the great classics of watchmaking: the Barrel shape. Consistent with its Trendy watchmaker status, SAINT HONORE, takes this traditional form to a new level with audacious and sensual settings to create a seductive and very elegant timepiece. Named after the famous disctrict of Paris, Monceau was born to seduce. The"inner workings"of the automatic line, exclusively developed from the ETA 2824 movement. Innovation features as much on the dial as under the case in the Open Dial version. On the front, the date disc holds out the prospect of its effects. On the back, the exposed movement reveals its "Côtes de Genève" decoration and its "black gold" weight.

P71,100

Available at Rustan's, Shangrila, Gateway, Montre Podium, SM The Block, SM Mall of Asia

Filipino fashion shines with Samuel and Kevin

IT'S NO SECRET THAT FILIPINOS ARE among Asia's fashionable set. Even if we don't have the purchasing power of our more affluent Asian neighbors, our creativity and innate fashion sense helps us manage to find brands that suit our lifestyle, trendsetting appetite and of course, budget.

One such brand that continues to enjoy a strong following among Filipinos is Samuel and Kevin, which recently unveiled its exciting Fall/Winter Collection.

Samuel and Kevin CEO Jong See enthuses that S&K clothes and accessories are well suited to the Filipino lifestyle. It's got a great mix of comfort, style, durability and affordability, making each item a must-have for fashion-forward people who know how to have fun and get more value out of their money-just like Filipinos!

The Fall/Winter collection is inspired by such influences as metallic, shimmer and slimness, as the collection "revolves around the vintage wash jeans and utilitarian cargo pants that show varied lifestyles for hip urban living," says See.

The men's collection features heavy metal rocker, metro biker, painter's indigo, combat surplus and dust trooper, while women have the slim beauty collection to choose from.

The latest collection combines the colors of rust, taupe, khaki, olive green, red, purples, grey and charcoal combined with the shimmer of glistening gold and silver materials, making each piece a must-have among today's fashionable set.

In slim beauty, Samuel and Kevin lets women accentuate their slender figure by making use of skinny jeans that really hug the legs. On the other hand, heavy metal rocker, painter's indigo and metro biker all have utility and versatility in mind for the user as each jean is made to last while maintaining style and comfort that allows it to be used for various occasions.

If you're into the military look, you'll definitely love the combat surplus look with its fatigue cargo pants and olive shirt. Finally, dust trooper is for those who just love to hang out in a very stylish way, thanks to its slickly cut jeans, hot shirt and cool jacket.

Worldwide, Samuel and Kevin has more than 600 outlets serving the fashion needs of young, trend-setting people.

Dark gray long sleeve top with camisole slim beauty denims with braided bronze belt

Printed tee with zip up hoodie jacket camo cargo pants and lace up sneakers

SCIENCE/HEALTH

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Drug combo works synergistically in Type 2 diabetes

By Charles E. Buban

TYPE 2 DIABETES IS an increasingly common chronic disease that occurs in people who have difficulty converting glucose (a type of sugar primarily used by our cells to fuel itself) into energy.

In Type 2 diabetes (formerly known as noninsulin dependent diabetes), the body of the individual does not make enough insulin or still makes insulin, but cannot properly use it.

Their blood glucose levels are high either because their cells are resistant to insulin (a hormone that helps convert glucose into energy) or because their pancreas does not produce enough insulin.

"Without enough insulin, the body cannot move blood sugar into the cells, causing sugar to build up in the bloodstream. And high blood sugar levels can cause severe problems with the heart, eyes, kidneys and nerves," explained Dr. Ruby Tan Go of the Philippine Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society.

Current recommendations

Current recommendations for those with Type 2 diabetes include a trial of diet and exercise as first-line therapy but if the desired level of glycemic control is not achieved within a three-month period, drug intervention is required.

Sadly, a lot of people with Type 2 diabetes do not get enough help from one drug.

However, researchers recently found that taking two diabetes drugs can improve glucose control including the combination of glimeperamide (Solosa) and metformin.

"Once you are diagnosed with diabetes, you are typically prescribed a large number of medications. Compliance becomes a problem and there are data showing that decreasing the number of times a drug is dosed daily increases compliance," Go said.

Combination drugs help

"In order to properly take care of diabetes, many patients require multiple medications. Combination drugs could help," she said.

Glimepiride (Solosa) works by increasing the amount of insulin that the pancreas releases while also encouraging the use of sugar in the blood by the cells in the body which need it.

Manufactured by sanofi aventis, the drug is a first-line option for treating Type 2 diabetes in people who are not overweight and when diet and exercise have failed to control blood sugar levels.

Metformin, on the other hand, reduces the amount of glucose released from the liver and increases the amount taken up and used by the rest of the body.

The drug also reduces the level of fats in blood and helps people stabilize or reduce their weight.

Both agents act to improve glucose tolerance through different primary processes: glimepiride helps the body produce more insulin to reduce blood sugar and metformin acts as an aid to insulin acceptance in the cells.

Improved glycemic control

"Many people with Type 2 diabetes will require combination treatment to achieve a much-improved glycemic control and oral hypoglycemic agent Solosamet tablet (combination of 2 mg glimepiride and 500 mg of metformin) holds so much promise for individuals with Type 2 diabetes," said Dr. Araceli Panelo, a diabetologist and executive director of the Institute for the Studies of Diabetes Foundation.

Panelo explained that Type 2 is a complex disease and one could get significantly better therapeutic effects by targeting different systems: a glimepiramide to help the pancreas while metformin to work on the liver.

"Combining drugs can give patients lower doses, fewer side effects, and better glycemic control," the doctor concluded.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90 to 95 percent of all diabetes cases worldwide, which currently affects 246 million people.

Easing pain through poisons

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

LAST AUGUST, I WROTE ABOUT National Scientist Lourdes Cruz and her work on marine sea snails (*Conus*). The venom of the sea snail is considered more deadly than that of the snake, scorpion, or puffer fish, but it has vital uses in many fields.

With the help of Mailyn Terrado of the Ateneo de Manila University Chemistry Department, let us now focus on Cruz's colleague, Baldomero "Toto" Olivera. Since childhood, he has been fascinated with the marine world. He loved sea snails, not just for their color and beauty, but for their hunting technique. Mostly fish-eaters, the snails harpoon their prey using a needle-like tooth which injects the venom. The fish is instantly paralyzed, and the snail reels it in and eats it.

When he grew up, Olivera started to investigate the biochemistry of the snail venom. He found out that the toxins responsible for the paralysis and death of the fish are peptides, smaller than proteins, called conopeptides. Every species of the *Conus* snails can express around a hundred varieties of peptides that specifically target certain parts of the central nervous system.

Easing pain

Conopeptides are used to study the molecular mechanisms in the nervous system and can also be developed into valuable drugs. Olivera has discovered a certain conopeptide which can target specific channels of nerve cells, thus easing pain. A synthetic version is now available as an analgesic, with the generic name *Ziconotide*.

This drug is a thousand times more effective than morphine for chronic pain. It does not develop tolerance, thus preventing drug addiction. Ziconotide is the first drug approved that is derived from the *Conus* snails; other conopeptides are currently on clinical trials.

There are about 500 species of *Conus* snails. Since each snail produces around a hundred conopeptides, there will be more or less 50,000 conopeptides yet to be studied. Olivera, Cruz and their research group relish the challenge of studying them.

Outstanding chemist

Olivera is actively involved in a project called Biodiversity-Biomedical Link Initiative which aims to teach children and undergraduates from the Philippines, Hawaii and US territories on the Pacific about the richness of the natural resources around them.

Olivera earned his bachelor's degree in Chemistry from the University of the Philippines in 1960. He received his doctorate from the California Institute of Technology in 1966 and did postdoctoral works in Stanford University. Currently, he is a Distinguished Professor of Biology at the University of Utah where he has been part of the faculty since 1970. His work on sea snails was featured on the front cover of the prestigious Science magazine in 1990.

For more information on Olivera and Cruz's work on sea snails, read my book "Ten Outstanding Filipino Scientists," available in National Bookstore and Powerbooks. In January, Olivera will visit the Philippines at the Tenth Eurasia Conference on Chemical Sciences. Go to http://eurasiachem10.philippinechem.org or e-mail eurasiachem10@yahoo.com.

* * *

Correction: In last Saturday's column, the caption under the photo of chemist Michel Verdaguer mistakenly identified him as a Nobel winner. Verdaguer is internationally renowned, but he has still to win the Nobel.

Why do Japanese live longer?

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

HAKONE IN JAPAN IS QUITE A PLACE. For me it's one of the most picturesque places I've visited where hot springs abound and volcanic vents spew steam which mixes with the cool December fog forming a refreshing mist. On the foreground is the world-famous Mt. Fuji, equally majestic as our Mayon Volcano. Hakone is truly a soothing balm to frayed nerves.

What registers strongly in the visitor's mind in a visit to Hakone are images of senior citizens in their late 70s and 80s going up and down the steps to the "Boiling Valley," so called because of numerous vents from the volcanic activity underneath. The smell of sulphur is heavy and its grayish powder lines the stream flowing from the valley.

Black eggs

The spring in the steps in these elderly Japanese is enviable as they walk briskly to a small store in the valley where the locals and visitors buy and eat the "Black Eggs of Longevity."

The black eggs are actually ordinary hard-boiled eggs cooked from the many vents in the valley. The shell has turned black with the oxidation of sulphur, and the Japanese believe that eating at least an egg cooked from the valley increases one's lifespan by seven years. Eating more eggs won't improve one's longevity. Nonetheless, the Japanese eat the black eggs whenever they're in the vicinity of the "Boiling Valley" in Hakone.

The black-egg hypothesis is obviously a myth (although I did try one myself). Kazumi Yamaguchi, our good-natured travel coordinator, however cautions us not to tell any elderly from Hakone about our skepticism for their belief about the black eggs. "It is a well-known fact though that the Japanese practically outlive any race in the world," Kazumi says.

Life expectancy

Kazumi is actually correct. The life expectancy of Japanese men is a little more than 78 years, while Japanese women may expect to live up to age 85 on the average. Based on a World Health Organization report, the average life span for all Japanese is 81.9 years. The closest country to Japan is Hong Kong, where life expectancy is 78 years for males and 83.9 years for females.

In Japan, especially in places like Hakone, roughly one out of five people you see in the streets is an elderly. Population surveys also show that there are more than a million Japanese who are 90 years or older and many of them are still capable of doing activities of daily living such as dressing, eating and going to the toilet unassisted.

Are the Japanese blessed with good longevity genes? It doesn't look like it's in the genes, experts claim, since the prewar Japanese had a much shorter lifespan compared to other nationalities including the Americans and Europeans. Their longevity however steadily increased over the last 30 years.

Doing a gross survey of people walking in the street, one would easily note that there are not too many obese individuals in Japan. I think we have more obese individuals here. A healthy diet and active lifestyle appear to be part of the Japanese culture.

"There must be a sashimi and sushi connection to the Japanese longevity," Kazumi volunteered. And their disease pattern supports this explanation.

Although the prevalence of cancer is relatively high in Japan, the incidence of heart diseases and strokes has considerably gone down over the last several decades which is most likely due to their low-fat and high fish consumption. Deep-sea fish is rich in omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids which is now well established to have a protective effect against heart attack and stroke.

Japan also has one of the efficient public health insurance systems worldwide and the improved healthcare is obviously a significant factor impacting the increased Japanese longevity.

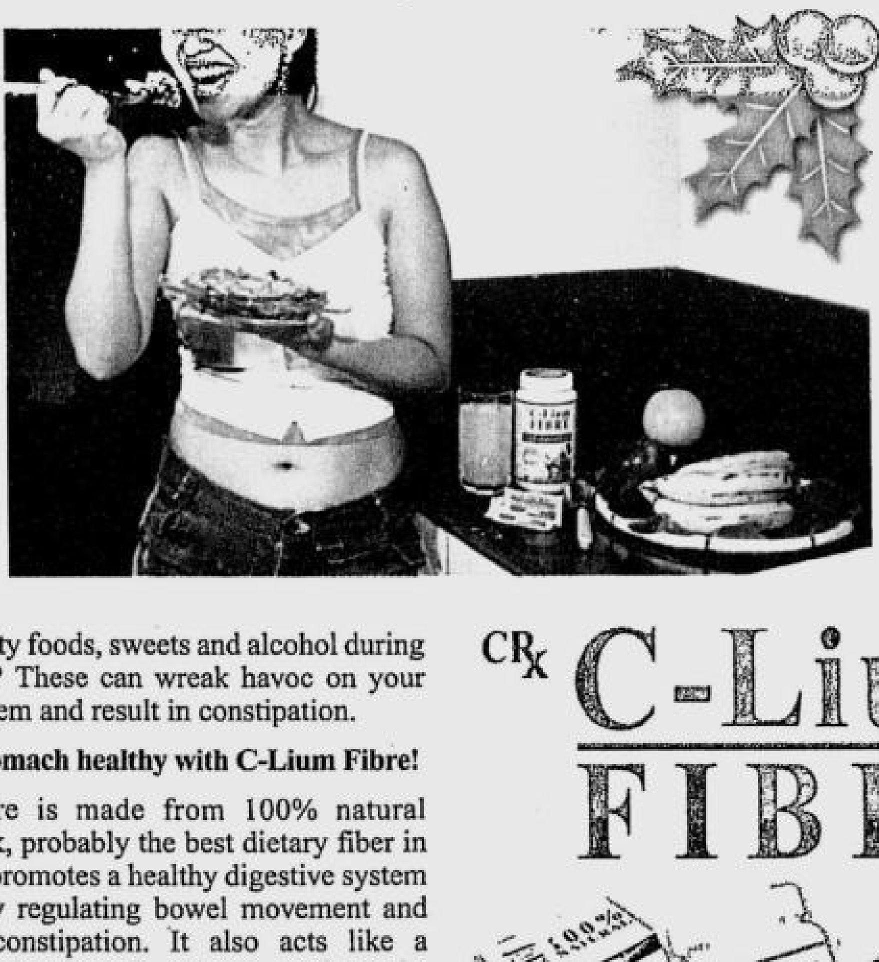
12 habits

Aside from their healthy diet and efficient healthcare, what can we learn from the Japanese lifestyle? In a 1998 nationwide survey of Japanese octogenarians, these healthy seniors consistently practiced "12 habits." These were:

- Eating three meals a day at regular times
- Chewing their food well
- Taking lots of fiber in their diet through vegetables and fruits
- Drinking tea frequently
- Not smoking
- Having a family doctor
- Being independent-minded
- Enjoying activities that changed their mood
- Reading newspapers
- Watching television
- Going out often; and
- Waking up and going to bed at regular times.

If we want to have many more happy returns of our birthdays well into our 80s or even 90s, we can learn from the healthy elderly Japanese way of life, minus the smoking habit.

A healthy lifestyle starts with a healthy stomach



Big meals, fatty foods, sweets and alcohol during the Holidays? These can wreak havoc on your digestive system and result in constipation.

Keep your stomach healthy with C-Lium Fibre!

C-Lium Fibre is made from 100% natural psyllium husk, probably the best dietary fiber in the world. It promotes a healthy digestive system by effectively regulating bowel movement and eliminating constipation. It also acts like a "sponge" to absorb toxic substances from the walls of your colon and flushes them out of your body before they are absorbed in your bloodstream.

Keep your stomach healthy this holiday season. Make C-Lium Fibre your daily habit!

CRx C-Lium® FIBRE

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Passion for Health
LOVE FOR LIFE

C-Lium Fibre comes in powder (jar or sachet) and capsules.
Available at mercury drug *and other leading drugstores and supermarkets nationwide*

How to choose the right Lasik center

CAREPLUS

Angelo Palmones

IN THE PAST FIVE YEARS, THE number of eye centers offering laser refractive surgery in the country has doubled. This is good news to patients as medical marketing helps keep surgical costs affordable and gives them the power of choice. But the power to choose can also put patients in a dilemma: "Which eye center is the right one for me?"

Most patients choose based on how much an eye center charges for refractive surgery. Quite a number decide based on referrals from relatives or friends who have undergone the procedure. Some choose based on how near the eye center is from their home or place of work. Others are referred to a particular eye center by their ophthalmologist or optometrist. Only a few actually conduct research before deciding on which eye center to undergo this life-changing procedure.

Here are important points on how to choose the right refractive surgery center.

Vision is priceless

One of the realities of life is that quality does not come cheap. State-of-the-art excimer laser machines used in refractive surgery are expensive. Maintaining them in tiptop condition is likewise costly, involving 24/7 climate control and stringent preventive maintenance protocols to ensure accuracy and safety.

With your vision on the line, you have to ask whether cheaper is really better, i.e. are you willing to risk your sense of sight just to save on costs? In these economically difficult times budget is of course a prime consideration, but note that many eye centers now offer 0 percent interest installment schemes for up to 6 months.

Screening is key

The fact of the matter is most eye centers in the country can effectively and safely perform the procedure—provided you are the "usual" refractive surgery candidate. How would you know if you are this kind of patient? You won't; at least not until the eye center has completed an extensive screening process, which is at the core of any reputable refractive surgery center.

The screening process is actually the most important part of refractive surgery. If the preoperative screening and planning are faulty, it will take nothing short of a miracle to get the exact results you want. Be wary of "quick screens" that "railroad" you through the process and invariably certify you as a "suitable" candidate. Keep in mind that not all refractive surgery centers in the country are fully equipped to maximize scrutiny of your eye during the screening process; most only have the minimum requirement to perform this all-important series of tests.

Each person is unique. Even your right eye may be different from your left. A comprehensive screening process will include a detailed examination of your lifestyle, medical history, current health status, and expectations. Make sure your doctor spends time with you to answer all your questions and concerns.

Track record, training, experience

Check out the credentials and track record of the eye center, its surgeons and staff. The level of personnel training and experience affects all aspects of refractive surgery—from screening and the procedure itself to post-op care.

Total refractive surgery center

ST. LUKE'S VISION LASER CENTER IS THE TOTAL REFRACTIVE SURGERY center. Its staff of highly trained experts complemented by a wide array of state-of-the-art equipment is capable of addressing the entire range of refractive errors. The Center is also equipped to manage patients who have had previous refractive surgery elsewhere.

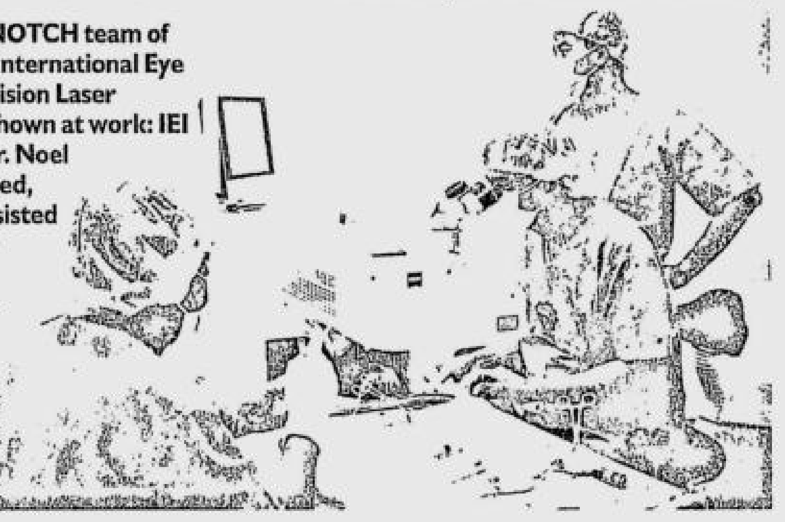
The Vision Laser Center is the only refractive eye center in the Philippines located in a hospital accredited by the prestigious Joint Commission International (JCI), which guarantees the highest quality of patient care and safety.

For inquiries, please call 723-0101 ext. 4142, 722-2965, (telefax) 727-5459, log on to www.2020.stluke.com.ph, or visit the Vision Laser Center at the 1st floor of the St. Luke's Medical Center Main Building.

During screening, it would be very easy to miss a rare, "exotic" eye irregularity and mistake it for "normal," which could cause problems for the patient later. Conversely, an uncommon but normal eye variant can be quite easily misconstrued as "abnormal," disqualifying an otherwise suitable candidate from undergoing the procedure.

A highly trained and seasoned refractive surgery team can recognize these subtle nuances. When an unexpected complication develops during a surgical procedure, the only things that can bail you out are the training and experience of the surgeons and their staff. The same holds true in the rare instance when post-op problems crop up.

Specialists are called specialists for a reason. If you want to seek the most appropriate treatment for a heart problem, you go to a cardiologist. If you have a lung condition, you consult a pulmonologist. Therefore, a person who is considering refractive surgery should consult an eye doctor (ophthalmologist), particularly one with special training in cornea and refractive surgery.



THE TOPNOTCH team of St. Luke's International Eye Institute-Vision Laser Center is shown at work: IEI director Dr. Noel Chua (seated, middle) assisted by IEI-VLC head Dr. Ruben Lim Bon Siong and staff.

Technology

As important as professional expertise is the technology available at an eye center or, to put it more accurately, the range of technologically advanced treatments. Remember that there is more than one way to improve your vision and the choice of the procedure you will undergo should always depend on what's best for your eye, not on what's available in the eye center.

Another key but often overlooked consideration is whether an eye doctor has any financial interests in the eye center, i.e. if the doctor (as stipulated in his/her contract) is required to perform a minimum number of patients in the eye center where he/she is practicing. Imagine if your eye doctor practices in an eye center that only offers one type of refractive surgery. See the picture?

Technology available today has gone a long way from traditional laser refractive surgery and has ushered in a new era of super vision (i.e., better than 20/20 vision). These incredible results were made possible largely through technological advances in wavefront correction capabilities of the new excimer lasers. Note, however, the difference between "wavefront-guided" and "wavefront-optimized" corrections.

"Wavefront-optimized" corrections keep the shape of the cornea as "aspheric" (not quite spherical) as possible, making them, in many cases, better than traditional corrections. "Wavefront-guided" corrections, however, are potentially superior treatments that allow even better vision for some people who will not benefit as much from "wavefront-optimized" corrections. Make sure your eye center has a wavefront aberrometer as this is the best way to measure the wavefront that needs to be corrected and to determine if you will benefit from the "wavefront-guided correction" to begin with.

In considering refractive surgery procedures (such as Lasik) offered by eye centers, remember that "latest" or "newest" are relative terms that shouldn't be confused with "most technologically advanced." "Latest" or "newest" could mean that the technology was already available in other countries but launched only recently in the Philippines or that the equipment had been available for years but was just recently bought by the eye center. Excimer lasers are manufactured by several companies and, like car manufacturers, these companies regularly come up with their "latest models" which are upgrades of the basic model. In general, an eye center that claims to offer the "latest" laser is simply saying that it has purchased the latest model of a particular manufacturer.

As such, the "most advanced" laser available will change as often as manufacturers upgrade their product lines. The best way to choose the "best excimer laser" (in terms of proven efficacy and safety) is to look for those with US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval.

Bottom line: Choose a refractive eye center that satisfactorily addresses all your questions and concerns, one you are comfortable with, one you can entrust your eye sight.

***

Angelo Palmones is a science and technology broadcaster. For feedback, please e-mail the Healthcare Technology and Outcomes Information Bureau at inquire@htoib.com.

FDA concludes no sufficient data on heart attack risk for GSK diabetes drug

THE US FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA) concluded that there is no sufficient data to indicate that the risks of heart attacks or death for GlaxoSmithKline's diabetes medicine rosiglitazone are different from the other oral type 2 diabetes treatments.

This comes after the completion of an extensive and thorough review by the FDA of available data on the risk of myocardial ischemia. In line with this development, GSK recently announced that it is implementing changes to the US product label for its type 2 diabetes treatment rosiglitazone maleate.

The existing boxed warning has been revised to add the FDA's conclusion that, while an FDA meta-analysis of short-term studies—mostly against placebo—showed an association between rosiglitazone maleate and an increase in myocardial ischemic events, that risk was not confirmed or excluded in three long-term clinical trials comparing the drug against both placebo and other oral antidiabetes medicines.

It will be updated to state that the available data on the risk of myocardial ischemia are inconclusive.

The FDA has also concluded there is insufficient information available to determine whether any oral antidiabetic medicine reduces cardiovascular risk. It has directed that the sentence—"There have been no clinical studies establishing conclusive evidence of macrovascular risk reduction with rosiglitazone maleate or any other oral antidiabetic drugs"—will be added as a warning on the labels of all oral antidiabetic medicines.

Sugar vs sugar

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

THIS COLUMN IS NOT GOING TO COMPARE refined white sugar and brown sugar, nor will it differentiate between sugar and the contents of those blue, pink and yellow sugar substitutes.

Rather, the topic is a psychological dilemma that relates to the ongoing Christmas festivities. The question is: Can people resist the urge to overindulge in sugary desserts if they know that their willpower is actually fueled by sugar itself?

A review article from the current issue of the journal Current Directions in Psychological Science highlights an earlier paper suggesting sugar provides the energy that gives people their self-control.

Based on previous studies, low energy levels indicate that the body needs more energy in the form of glucose to keep resisting the urge to have that extra dessert.

Effect on self-control

To prove sugar's effect on self-control, psychologists Matthew Gaillot and his colleagues from Florida State University and Texas A&M University conducted a three-part study detailed in the February issue of the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.

They started by proving that exercising self-control has an effect on blood sugar levels. In one experiment, participants discussed race and gender issues with a researcher whose own ethnicity would come into play. Researchers measured the participants' blood sugar levels afterward and found that being tactful and avoiding anything that could be racially offensive did burn glucose, which the body uses as an energy source.

Lead author Gaillot and his team then did a series of tests to show that self-control under low energy conditions was weakened. For example, participants assigned an unsolvable puzzle were timed to see how long they kept at it. Those who'd recently completed a self-control task prior to this current assignment didn't persevere as long as the other participants, indicating they could no longer motivate themselves to keep going.

Better performance

Finally, the researchers asked if ingesting sugar could counter the low energy effects. Low energy participants were given either a juice drink with sugar or with a sugar substitute and then provided with yet another assignment that tested their self-control. After comparing the test results and blood sugar levels of the participants, Gaillot and his team found that those who had the sugar-laced drink performed better and held out longer than did those who had the sugar substitute.

So let's assume for a moment that for the past year you've stuck to your resolution to lose weight and keep it off. For months, you've battled the urge to have that second slice of cake, or resisted that craving for ice cream. Giving up sweets for Lent was easy; turning down the candy on your birthday was harder.

Now you're showing off the new you at all the holiday gatherings, and the array of desserts at each party is tempting you to overindulge. You need sugar to keep resisting the urge to sample everything, right?

Moderation is key

Not quite, say the researchers. Moderation is key. The study's conclusions are not a license to eat sugar, especially around this time of the year.

"We do not intend to advocate consuming large quantities of sugar as an ideal strategy for improving self-control," wrote Gaillot and his colleagues in their February study.

Candy bars, they wrote, are a quick energy boost, but longer-lasting energy comes from foods like meats, nuts and grains.

Turning off the craving isn't as easy as some weight-loss infomercials might suggest. One physics formula defines work as the amount of force needed to move an object some distance. Psychologists now offer an alternate explanation: work is the energy expended controlling oneself from reaching for the extra cookie or stifling the urge to say something that shouldn't be shared.

***

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

Targeted Therapy brings new hope for advanced breast cancer patients

Did you know that Filipino women face the highest risk of breast cancer in Asia? Despite numerous efforts to raise awareness for the disease, the Philippines is still ranked first in breast cancer incidence in Asia and has a higher prevalence rate than those in several Western countries, including Spain, Italy, and most Eastern European countries. This life-threatening disease is also affecting younger women in Asia compared to the United States and Europe. According to the Philippine Cancer Society Inc., an estimated 14,043 new cases will be diagnosed this year, which will claim the lives of nearly 6357 women in the country.

Generally, the disease is still being diagnosed late in its course, affecting the survival rate of women with breast cancer in the Philippines, which is currently below 50%. Thousands of Filipino women are robbed of the chance to experience and enjoy life with their families because of this. Globally, advanced breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in women, claiming more than 400,000 lives each year. The median survival time for women treated for metastatic or stage 4 breast cancer is two years.

Women who have been diagnosed with this terrible disease can find hope in a number of treatment methods that have been found to cure breast cancer, limit the spread of the disease and provide relief of symptoms. These treatment options include surgery, chemotherapy, mastectomy, radiotherapy and hormonal therapy.

Even those with metastatic cancer are given hope with new treatments being discovered that gives them more time than ever before. One such treatment method is targeted therapy. Because these therapies are more specific than conventional cytotoxic chemotherapy, they are intended to have less effect on normal cells, which may reduce the chance of side effects commonly caused by current cancer treatments and more importantly, can potentially improve patient survival.

One such treatment targets breast cancer cells through a protein called ErbB2: ErbB2 may be found in greater amounts or has greater activity in certain cells, resulting in these cells developing into tumors. Targeted treatment for ErbB2 inhibits the overexpression of these proteins so the tumor cells are no longer able to grow. For patients with locally advanced ErbB2 positive breast cancer, delaying the progression of the disease is an important treatment goal and can make all the difference.

While breast cancer remains one of the top killers of women all over the world, advances in medicine and technology are helping more patients cope with it better. Breast cancer patients are advised to consult their doctors for the treatment option that is most suitable for their needs and condition. With vigilance, support from loved ones and the appropriate medical treatment, more patients with breast cancer can look forward to having a fighting chance against the disease and the hope that they can eventually conquer it.

This information on breast cancer is brought to you by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). GSK is committed to developing innovative medicines for the treatment of debilitating diseases including metastatic breast cancer in line with its mission of improving the quality of human life by enabling people to do more, feel better and live longer.

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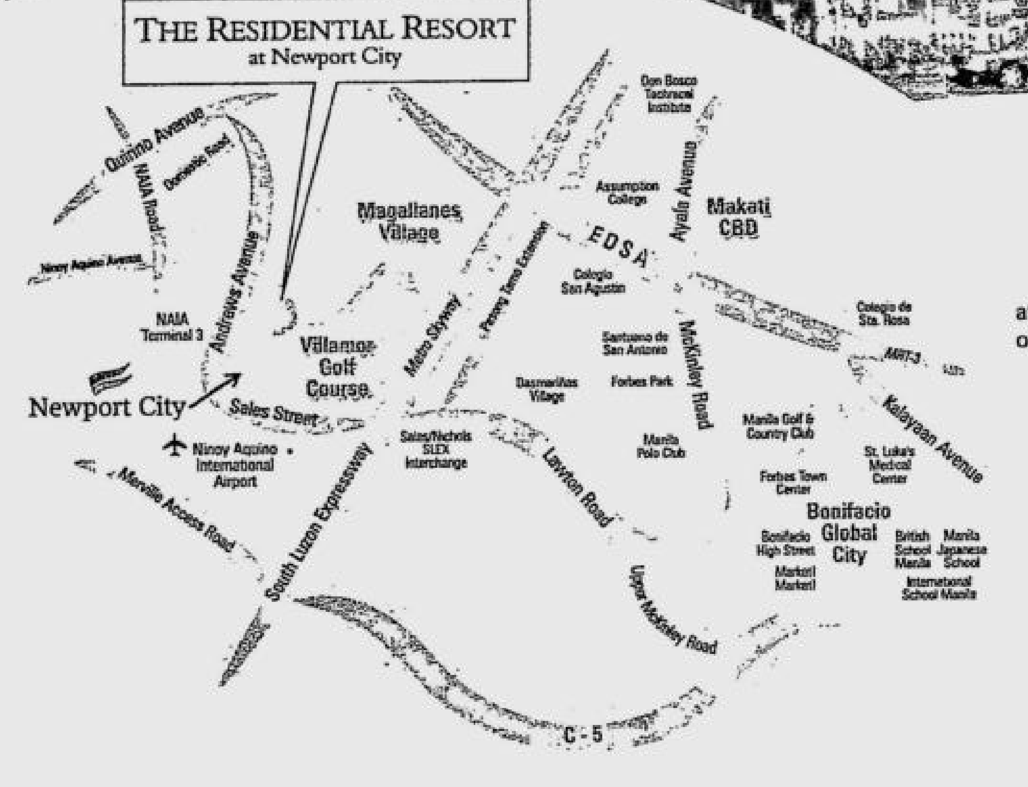
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EDSA
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Makati CBD
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PROPERTY

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Christmas has found a new home
Here at CrossWinds

Christmas runs 365 days in this Tagaytay village

By Tessa R. Salazar

TAGAYTAY CITY—WITH 8,000 lush pine trees dancing to the interweaving of the winds from Tagaytay and Laguna de Bay, Christmas will be merry, and will last all year round in Crosswinds.

Crosswinds, the 100-hectare undulating pine estate of Sen. Manny Villar's Brittany Corp. located on Calamba Road in Barangay Iruhin Central, Tagaytay City, will be known as the "quaint little Christmas Village" where it will have as its theme "Christmas all year."

This was revealed by Camille Villar, the 22-year-old youngest daughter of the senator, during an exclusive interview with INQUIRER Property at this cool and windy pine estate which has a peak height of 2,500 feet above sea level.

Camille, who graduated in 2006 at the Ateneo de Manila with a business management course, is the head of corporate communications of Crown

CHRISTMAS/ B2-2

Transfer Pavilion
Trellised Canopy Walkway
GARDEN TOWER 3
Basketball/Tennis Court
Game Room
Business Center
Special Paving Pattern
Sculpture Water Feature
Pedestrian Garden Plaza
Sitting Area
GARDEN TOWER 2
Pool Deck
Shallow Water Foot Bath
Cabana with Tensile Fabric Roof
Water Play Pool
Wading Pool
Bubble Pool
Landscaped Sun Deck
Outdoor Spa
20-meter Lap Pool
Palm Court
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GARDEN TOWER 1
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ENTERTAINING is always a delight at the Deux Pointe's Gran Duetto

A SANTA like this can brighten anyone's Christmas.

THERE'S a perfect Yuletide decor for everyone here.

Christmas runs 365 days in this Tagaytay village

From page B2-1

Asia. Her siblings Paolo, 31 (management engineering graduate from Wharton University), and Mark, 29 (economics, political science and philosophy graduate from University of Pennsylvania), are also involved in the family's real estate empire.

Gourmet Village

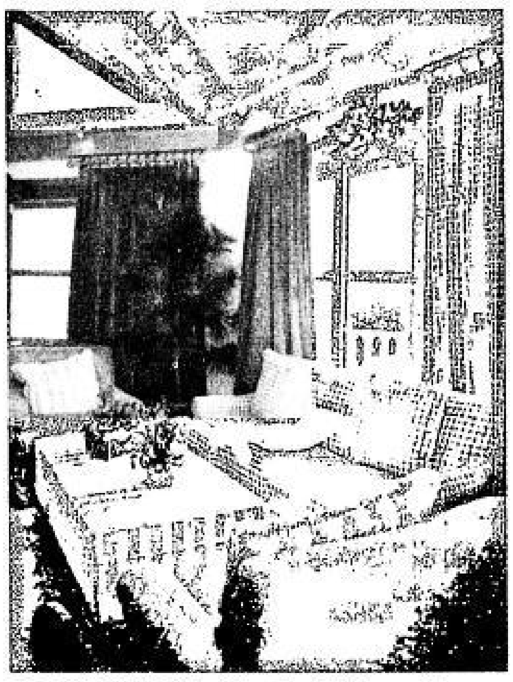
In 2008, Crosswinds will start construction of a Gourmet Village revolving around a modest chapel that will celebrate *simbang gabi* (night masses).

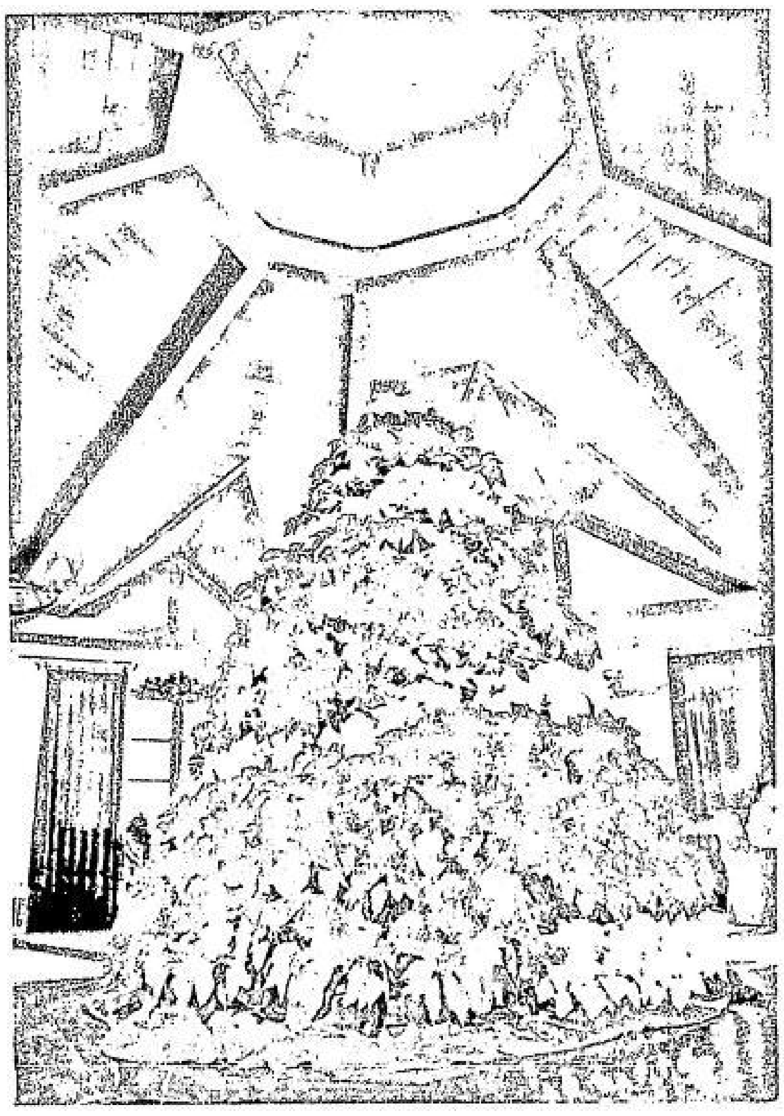
The Gourmet Village will also dedicate a small area for commerce with specialty restaurants and garden cafés, deli and bread shops that will serve freshly baked goods, pastries, Swiss cheese and hot chocolates (presumably to stave off the Christmas cold).

It will also have a Christmas store with varying Yuletide what-nots such as Santa's giant socks, dolls, ornaments, plates, mugs, wreaths, Christmas trees, Santa collection, snowman items, swag and garland, pillow cases and stockings available 365 days a year. The items' prices range from P50 to P4,000. So far, the temporary Christmas Store at Crosswinds serves as a preview, with some of these available items.

Santa's secret village is geared to be a weekend activity for children.

This Christmas village will also have Bed and breakfast; Day and Spa wellness; Boutique and Curio outlets; Flower farm and herb garden. The tall pines that add to the 100-hectare Christmas Village's ambiance complement the Swiss-motivated pine community that features thematic architecture inspired by the chalets of Switzerland.

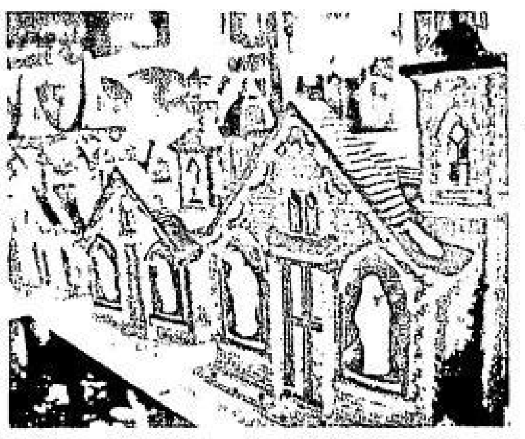

CROSSWINDS' holiday furnishings add a festive touch to this tranquil place.


THE POINSETTIA Christmas tree

All about pines

Camille said that Crosswinds, in a way, is propped up by pine trees, stressing her father's penchant for trees, particularly pine, landscaping and plants. In less than 10 years that the pine seedlings were nurtured inside Crosswinds, they have almost fully grown. She added that the family properties have always been built with small houses with dominant landscaping.

Camille described her father's pleasant surprise when he saw how the pine trees had grown. "Seven years ago, there was nothing here. It was bare. It's lush now. And to think (the trees) weren't part of the natural landscape."


VARIOUS choices of Christmas-themed figurines are available.

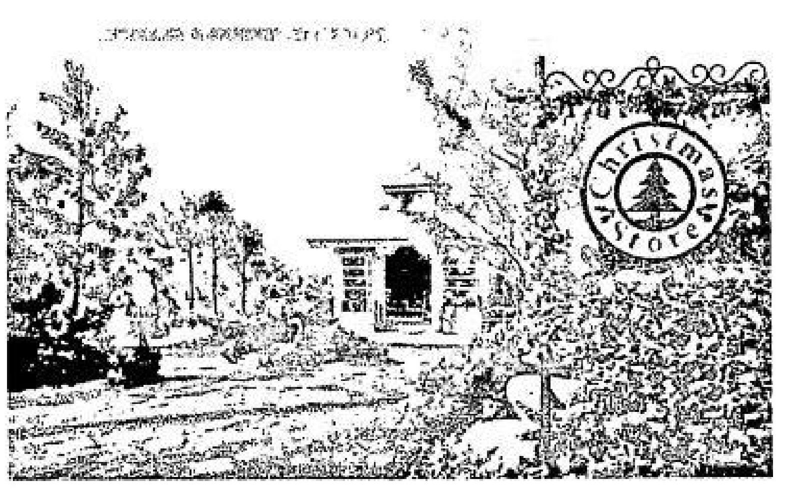
She added that in order to create a cool and quaint atmosphere, the best way is through trees.

"Nothing exudes cold weather than pine trees. The charm of Baguio is in pine trees," she said.

Crosswinds in Tagaytay joins other horizontal developments of Brittany that include Portofino in Alabang, Lake Front in Sucat, La Marea in San Pedro Laguna, Georgia Club in Sta. Rosa Laguna, and The Islands in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Vertical developments, on the other hand, are Avant at the Fort Makati, Mosaic and KL Mosaic at Greenbelt Makati.

Brittany is Villar's upscale real estate development company. Three other developments are CrownAsia (mid-end) and Camella (more affordable) and Communities Philippines (for regional developments).



THE CHRISTMAS store at Crosswinds

THESE dainty silver angels make any Christmas tree look elegant.

Units to choose from

Aside from the seven-story condominium buildings (two towers), there are quadruplex units of the Swiss Quadrilles, the Deux Pointe, duetto series situated on the highest and most prime locations with two to four bedrooms.

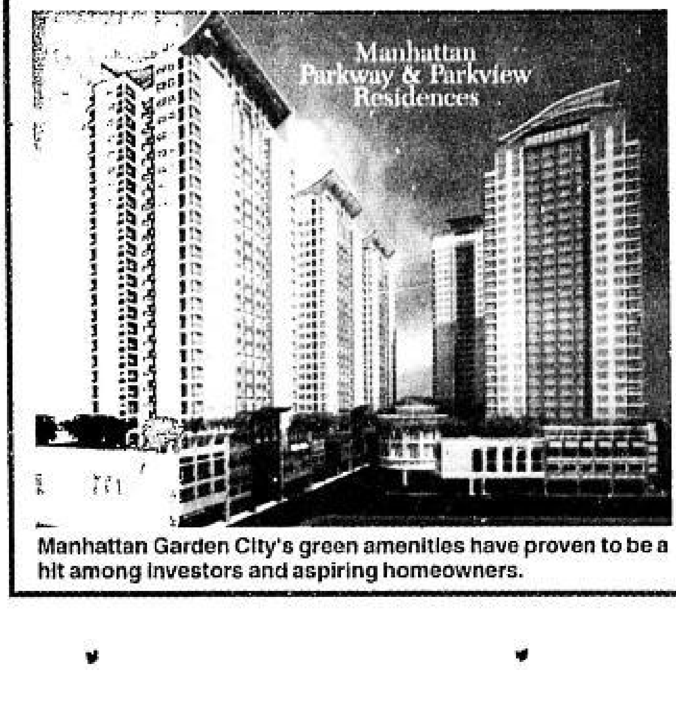
The Montreux Ville, a 4.3 hectare exclusive custom home site community on the north side, ranges from 260 to 560 sq m. The Pine Grove, also custom home sites with prime lots, ranges from 400 to 600 sq m and phase 2 from 225 to 374 sq m. The Peak View and Cedar Brooks have lots ranging from 450 to 1,000 sq m.

Asked if the Villar siblings would also enter politics, Camille's answer was: "Not right now but definitely not Pao or me but my brother Mark. He's a lot like my dad. He's like a 'mini-me' of my dad."

The Senator's trees are, indeed, fully grown. But the winds of politics—Christmas or no Christmas—have been known to sway even the tallest of them.

Manhattan Garden City: The Green Heart of the Metro

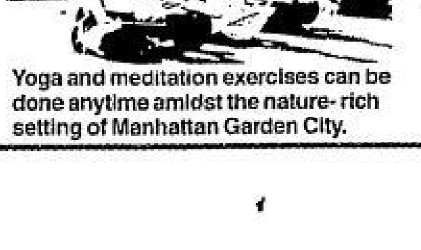
FOR DECADES now, the Araneta Center and its surrounding districts in Cubao have held a distinct advantage of being at the core of Metro Manila. It is the site of the country's first mall. It is where the MRT and LRT rails cross, one over the other. It is a transport, shopping, and entertainment hub.



Manhattan Garden City's green amenities have proven to be a hit among investors and aspiring homeowners.

But over the years, being the center has taken its toll. However, the face of Araneta Center will soon change, as Megaworld Corporation, the top residential condominium and business process outsourcing office buildings developer, will plant a "green heart" in the metropolis through its newest project, Manhattan Parkview Residence in Manhattan Garden City (MGC).

Manhattan Parkview will be the second set of condominium towers to rise in MGC after the sold-out three-tower Manhattan Parkway. Manhattan Garden City is an enclave of residential high-rises accessible to both the MRT and LRT 2 via a 729-meter, elevated garden walkway that will connect all the towers. Manhattan Parkview will have an outdoor development plan highlighted by a "walkable" interconnected area and green spaces.


Yoga and meditation exercises can be done anytime amidst the nature- rich setting of Manhattan Garden City.

"Most of us would prefer living in a home that is a sanctuary from the stresses of life, a softening haven where we can rest and rejuvenate," said Megaworld Central Properties Inc. President Anthony Charlemagne Yu.

He added, "A study has shown that well-placed plantings offer privacy and tranquility by screening out street noises and reducing glare from headlights. Another research found out that green space is beneficial to children in terms of improving their functioning. It enables them to think more clearly and cope better with life's stress, which is surely the same case for adults. Manhattan Parkview will give such advantages through a nature park experience. It will have tropical plants, large foliage, wild flowers, accents, and water features."

Manhattan Garden City's trellises and fountains make the walk to the MRT and LRT2 train stations enjoyable.

The Manhattan Garden City showroom and its elegantly appointed model units are conveniently located at the 3rd level of Gateway Mall. Please call 810-3333 or email inquire@themanhattangardencity.com to make a viewing appointment.

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Mobile (0920) 928-3726
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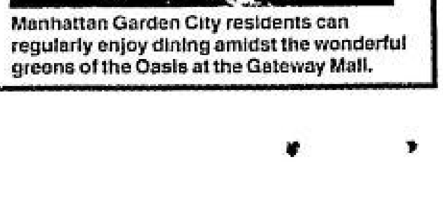
Manhattan Garden City residents can regularly enjoy dining amidst the wonderful greens of the Oasis at the Gateway Mall.

ENTERTAINING is always a delight at the Deux Pointe's Gran Duetto

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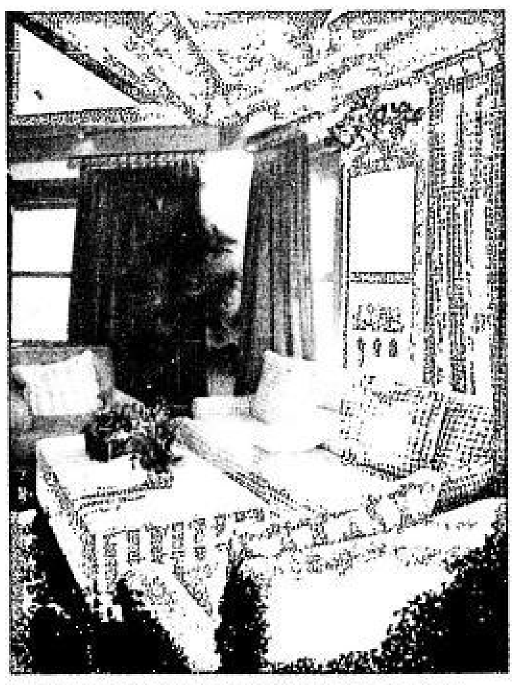

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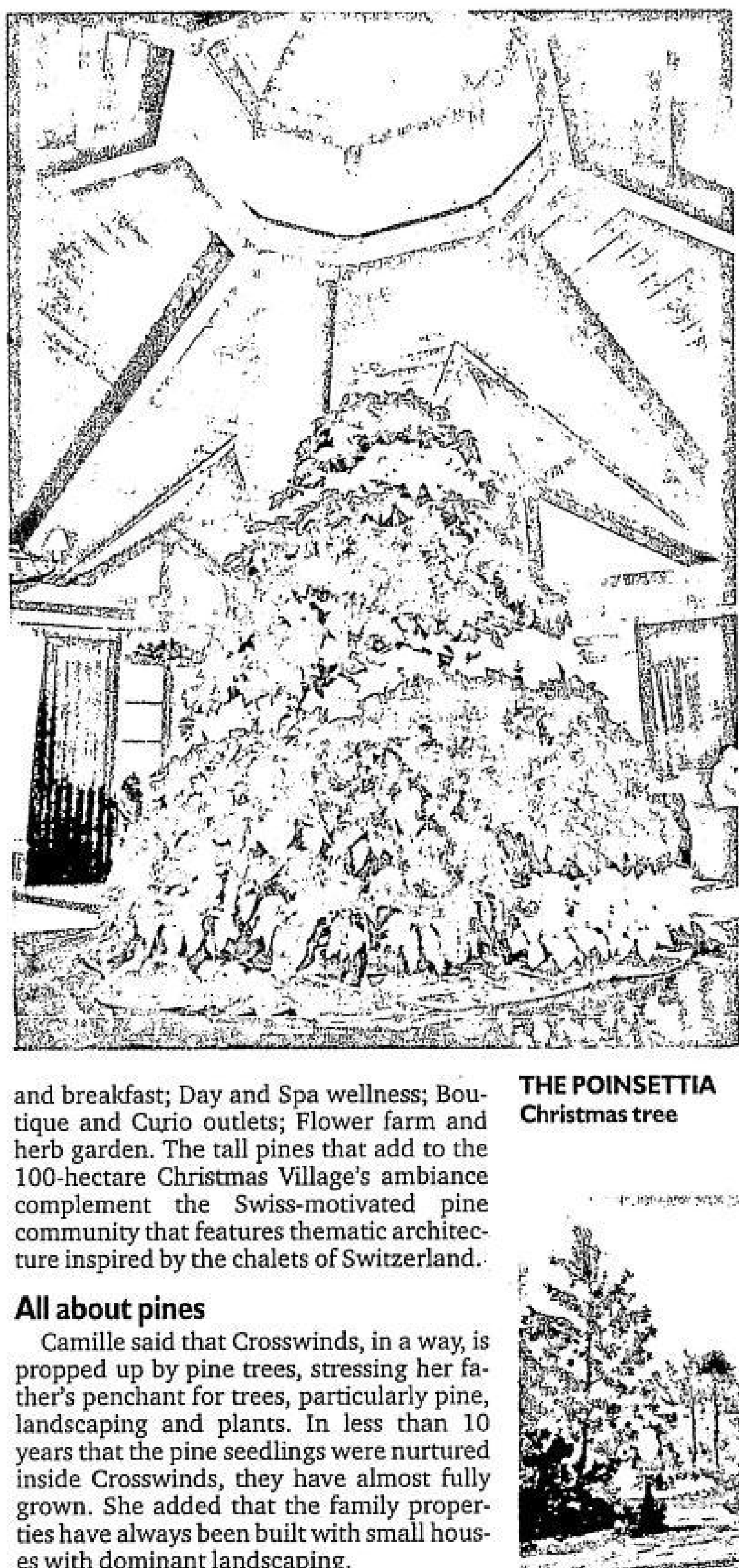

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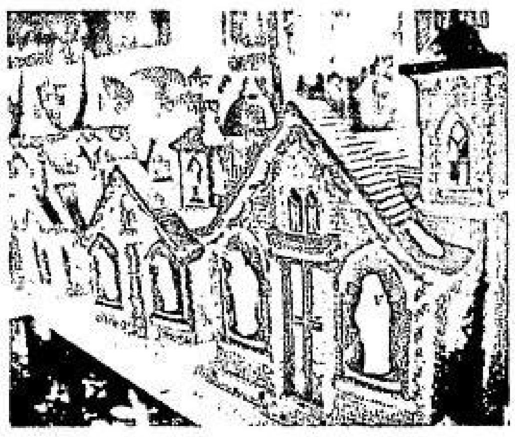

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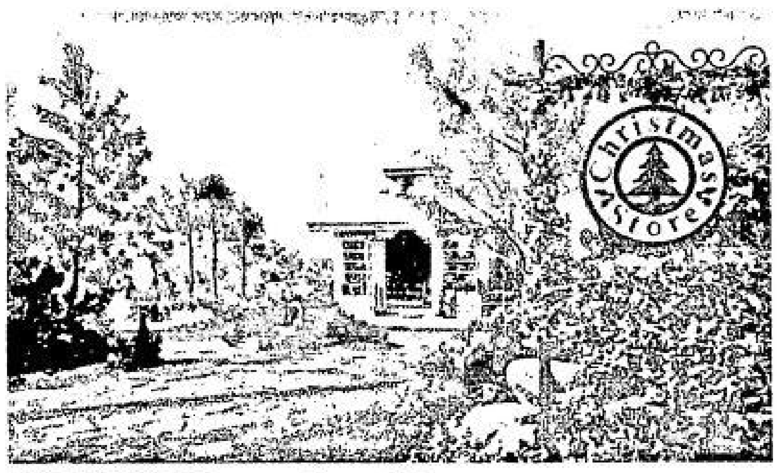
Vertical developments, on the other hand, are Avant at the Fort Makati, Mosaic and KL Mosaic at Greenbelt Makati.

Brittany is Villar's upscale real estate development company. Three other developments are CrownAsia (mid-end) and Camella (more affordable) and Communities Philippines (for regional developments).



THE CHRISTMAS store at Crosswinds

THESE dainty silver angels make any Christmas tree look elegant.

Units to choose from

Aside from the seven-story condominium buildings (two towers), there are quadruplex units of the Swiss Quadrilles, the Deux Pointe, duetto series situated on the highest and most prime locations with two to four bedrooms.

The Montreux Ville, a 4.3 hectare exclusive custom home site community on the north side, ranges from 260 to 560 sq m. The Pine Grove, also custom home sites with prime lots, ranges from 400 to 600 sq m and phase 2 from 225 to 374 sq m. The Peak View and Cedar Brooks have lots ranging from 450 to 1,000 sq m.

Asked if the Villar siblings would also enter politics, Camille's answer was: "Not right now but definitely not Pao or me but my brother Mark. He's a lot like my dad. He's like a 'mini-me' of my dad."

The Senator's trees are, indeed, fully grown. But the winds of politics—Christmas or no Christmas—have been known to sway even the tallest of them.

Manhattan Garden City: The Green Heart of the Metro

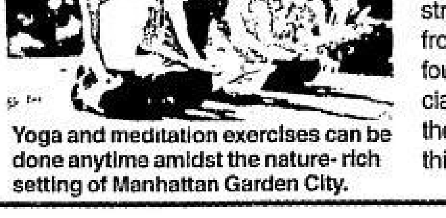
FOR DECADES now, the Araneta Center and its surrounding districts in Cubao have held a distinct advantage of being at the core of Metro Manila. It is the site of the country's first mall. It is where the MRT and LRT rails cross, one over the other. It is a transport, shopping, and entertainment hub.

Manhattan
Parkway & Parkview
Residences

Manhattan Garden City's green amenities have proven to be a hit among investors and aspiring homeowners.

But over the years, being the center has taken its toll. However, the face of Araneta Center will soon change, as Megaworld Corporation, the top residential condominium and business process outsourcing office buildings developer, will plant a "green heart" in the metropolis through its newest project, Manhattan Parkview Residence in Manhattan Garden City (MGC).

Manhattan Parkview will be the second set of condominium towers to rise in MGC after the sold-out three-tower Manhattan Parkway.



Yoga and meditation exercises can be done anytime amidst the nature- rich setting of Manhattan Garden City.

Manhattan Garden City is an enclave of residential high-rises accessible to both the MRT and LRT 2 via a 729-meter, elevated garden walkway that will connect all the towers. Manhattan Parkview will have an outdoor development plan highlighted by a "walkable" interconnected area and green spaces.

"Most of us would prefer living in a home that is a sanctuary from the stresses of life, a softening haven where we can rest and rejuvenate," said Megaworld Central Properties Inc. President Anthony Charlemagne Yu.

He added, "A study has shown that well-placed plantings offer privacy and tranquility by screening out street noises and reducing glare from headlights. Another research found out that green space is beneficial to children in terms of improving their functioning. It enables them to think more clearly and cope better with life's stress, which is surely the same case for adults. Manhattan Parkview will give such advantages through a nature park experience. It will have tropical plants, large foliage, wild flowers, accents, and water features."

Manhattan Garden City's trellises and fountains make the walk to the MRT and LRT2 train stations enjoyable.

The Manhattan Garden City showroom and its elegantly appointed model units are conveniently located at the 3rd level of Gateway Mall. Please call 810-3333 or email inquire@themanhattangardencity.com to make a viewing appointment.

For more information on this article, please contact:
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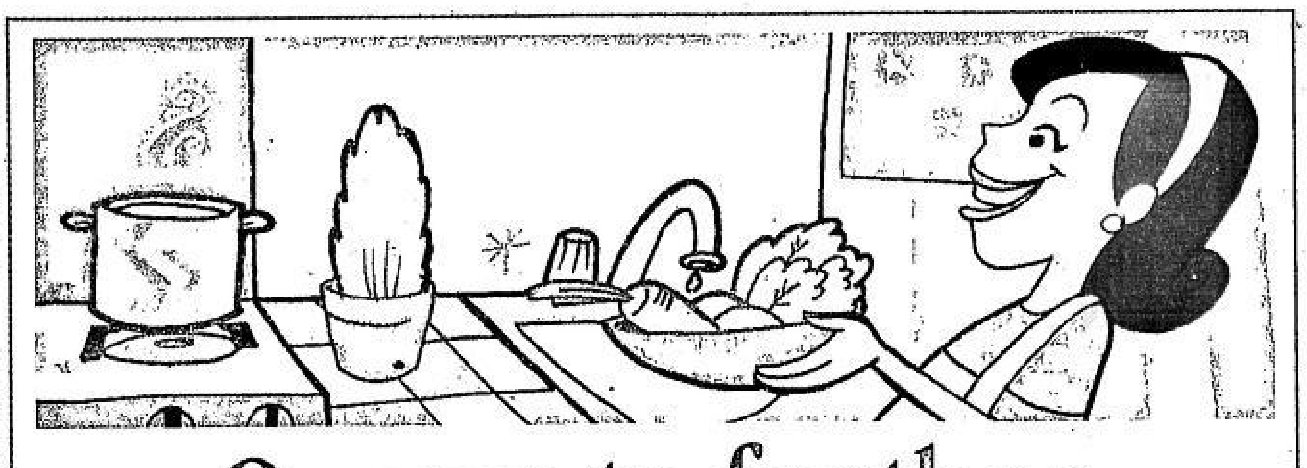
***Tel.** (02) 810-3333 local 106*
***Mobile** (0920) 928-3726*
***Email** rommel.orbigo@gmail.com*

Manhattan Garden City residents can regularly enjoy dining amidst the wonderful greens of the Oasis at the Gateway Mall.

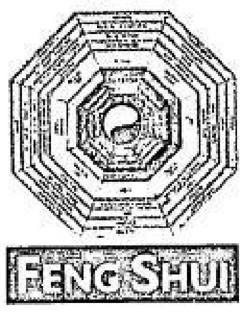


9 ways to further improve the kitchen

By Tess S. Samaniego

AS PEOPLE START TO PREPARE their noche buena and media noche, the kitchen will be the busiest area in the house during the holidays.

For some, the kitchen connotes "nourishment and prosperity" and thus, it is advised that enough attention be given as to how and where we prepare our food.



On top of keeping your kitchen spic and span, Stephanie Roberts, author of several feng shui books, offers several tips to further improve this part of your house:

1 **Keep the kitchen shiny and clean for energy.** A cluttered, dirty kitchen will have stagnant, dirty energy, which interferes with your ability to cook and enjoy healthy, nourishing food.

2 **Clean your cupboards and refrigerator regularly.** Excess food stored in the freezer can become clutter if it far exceeds a reasonable amount for your family. Old, stale food has old, stale energy.

3 **Add healthier, organic food to your diet.** Good nutrition is also good feng shui so try eating more fresh fruits and vegetables. Start thinking of junk food as clutter.

4 **Fix any problem with stove immediately.** A stove that is not in good working order implies a problem with financial resources. Also, an unused stove implies untapped resources or ignored opportunities. So use all burners regularly.

5 **Hang a mirror on the wall over the stove.** If you stand facing the wall while you cook, this leaves your back exposed, a position that is considered weak in feng shui. A mirror allows you to see what's going on behind you while you cook.

6 **Place something green between the stove and the sink, like a rug or plant.** Fire and water fight each other, so if the two are directly opposite each other, this can lead to arguments within the family. A sink and stove that are side by side also weaken the energy of the kitchen. Again, place something green between them.

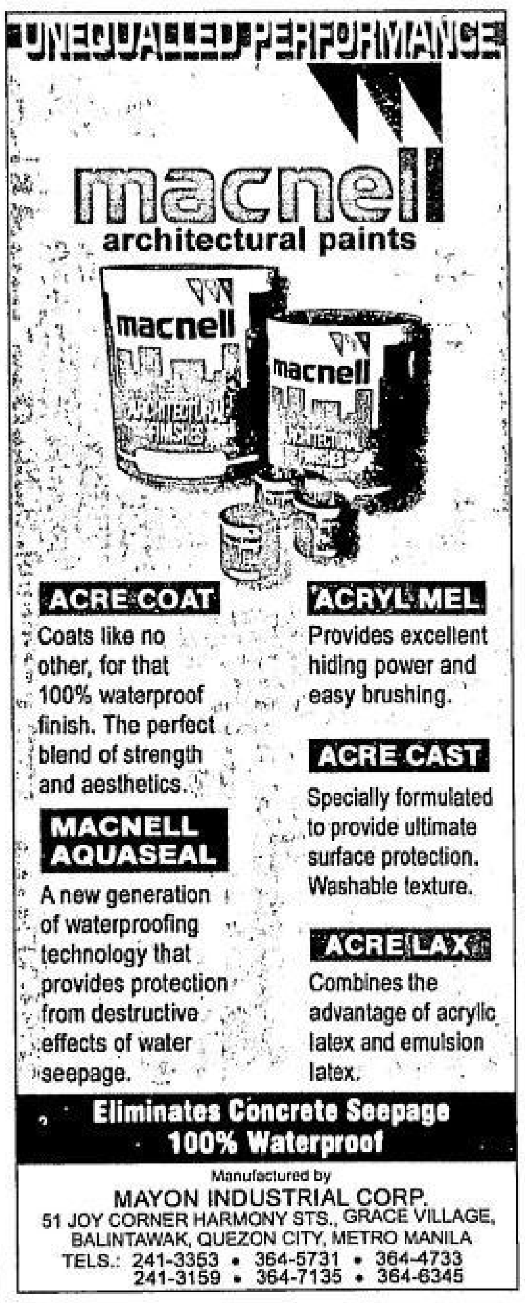
7 **Keep fire energy strong.** Stove is symbolic of wealth and since wood feeds fire, plants or plant imagery (or again, the color green) are good to have around and near the stove.

8 **Fresh flowers bring uplifting energy to the kitchen.** Place a bowl of fruit or a vase of flowers or plants on your kitchen table or window sill. Feng shui recommends real plants.

9 Bring good luck energy into the kitchen by placing nine of the biggest, roundest, most perfect orange oranges you can find and put them in a bowl in the center of the room. Nine is a feng shui power number and oranges symbolize good luck.

When you keep your kitchen clean and bright, you fill it with good feng shui. And by doing so, you create a powerful, positive energy that supports the health and prosperity of your family.

(Source: www.fengshuiforkitchens.com)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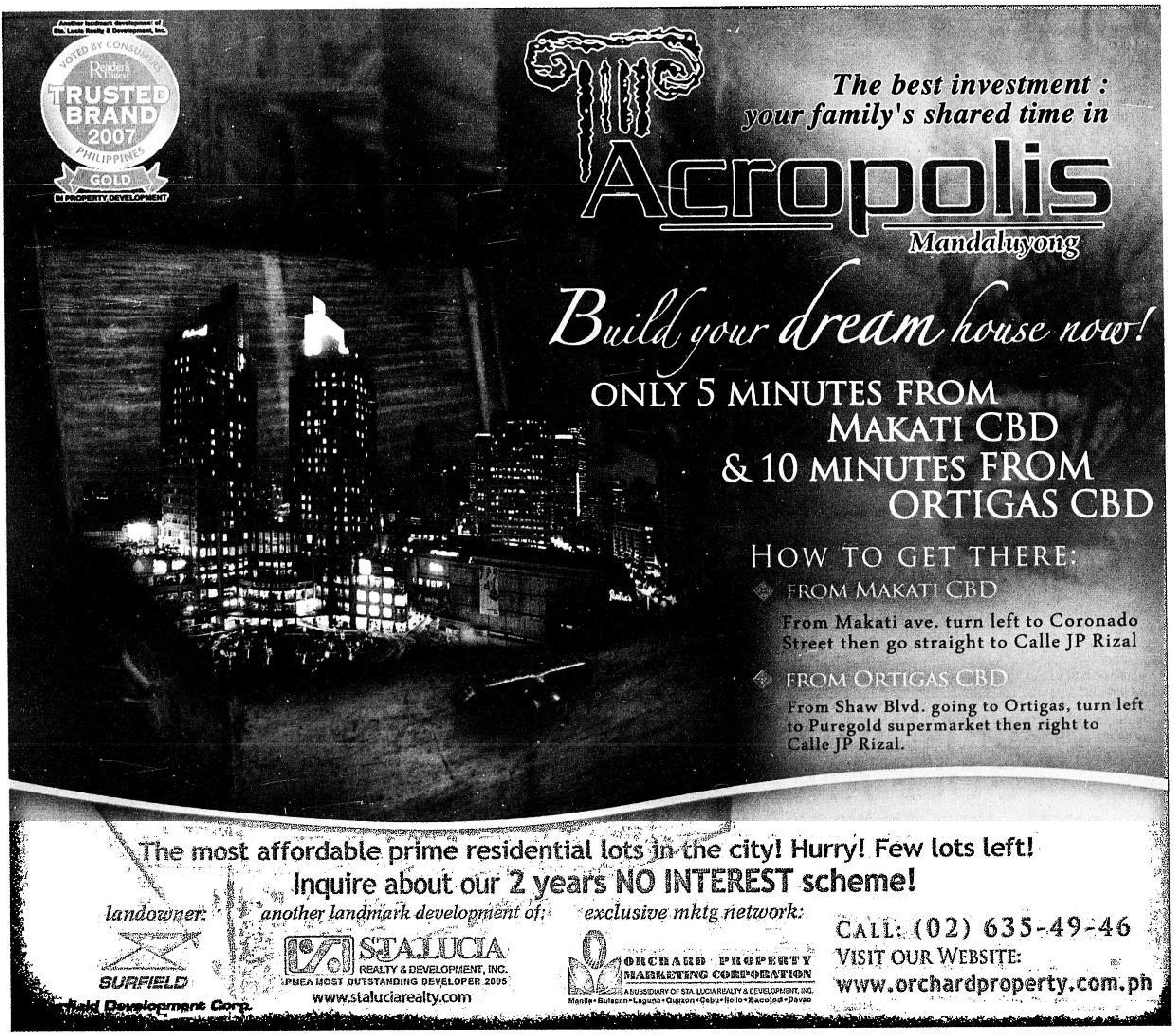
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Improving indoor air quality

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

IS YOUR INDOOR ENVIRONMENT MAKING you ill? What is indoor air quality and why the current fuss about it? Indoor air quality refers to the condition of interior air that affects the health, well-being and comfort of the occupants. While much concern has been voiced out about outdoor air pollution, we tend to forget that we spend most our waking hours indoors. Air quality is not measured by the level of pollutants alone, it also refers to the degree of thermal and visual comfort provided for its occupants.

The subject of indoor air quality has become popular due to the greater awareness of health problems like higher incidences of asthmas and allergies, not only in the workplace and educational institutions where people spend most of their waking hours, but in the homes, malls and other enclosed spaces as well. Other than the physical symptoms, there are also emotional and mental effects: lethargy, fatigue and the lack of concentration.

Contributing factors

While indoor air quality can generally be improved by good building design, more research is needed to understand the complex interaction of various elements within the interior space. Factors that contribute to bad indoor air quality and produce a slew of negative effects could be any of the following:

- Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from materials, furnishings and equipment;
- The design of the building enclosure in the control of moisture and outdoor pollutants;
- Poorly maintained mechanical ventilation systems;
- Lack of cleanliness and order;
- The density of occupants within a space.

Needless to say, many steps can be taken to help improve indoor air quality at home, the workplace, and in other enclosed environments. Try the following:

- Allow air exchange in a newly constructed space. While materials will be constantly emitting chemicals, the largest concentrations are in the first few weeks after installation. On the longer term, ensure constant ventilation to your spaces.
- Use natural cleansing agents and detergents to reduce exposure to potentially toxic chemicals. Many Internet sites feature on environment-friendly cleaning agents. If you use commercially available cleaners, keep portions used to a minimum.
- Keep plumbing P-traps filled with water to help prevent sewage gas (and even roaches!) from entering the building.
- Clean and change filters in air-conditioners, exhaust fans, fresh air ducts and have any air-conditioning system inspected regularly for cleaning. Reduce biological contaminants by installing dehumidifiers and emptying water trays in equipment. Frequently change bedding and clean carpets, upholstery, curtains and other soft furnishing to eliminate dust mites and mildew.
- Keep room densities low. Overcrowding is a source of microorganisms and allergens. More occupants means more activities which translate to more pollution.
- Provide natural light and ventilation which deters the growth of molds and mildew. Moreover, full spectrum light creates better working and living environments, improves moods and work efficiency.

Aside from the more immediate symptoms of bad indoor air, some respiratory diseases, heart disease and cancer, are results of its long-term effects. While to some, symptoms may not be immediately noticeable, they are a continuing threat to health and well-being. As the old saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is a pound of cure." Small improvements in how spaces are managed can greatly improve air quality.

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Splendido Taal is a 250-hectare gated community located right along the Tagaytay Ridge.The centerpiece of the residential development is the 60-hectare Splendido Taal Golf Club with its 18-hole all-weather championship golf course designed by "The Great White Shark" Greg Norman. Surrounding the golf course are the subdivision and fairway lots of the Splendido Taal Residential Estates, which include the four 12-storey luxury condominium buildings of the Splendido Taal Towers that will soon rise within the development.

The concept of living close to the wonders of nature permeates the splendid lifestyle that can be enjoyed at Splendido Taal. The unique geographic features of the place not only provide residents with post-card-perfect views, but also with cool mountain breeze almost on a year-round basis. With a 100-hectare forest surrounding the development, it will not be uncommon for those residing at Splendido Taal to wake up to the sounds of birds and a cherry sunrise during summer, or to a surreal blanket of fog during the cool 'ber' months.

The subdivision and fairway lots of the Spendido Taal Residential Estates are already fully developed and ready to accept residential construction. Residential units of the Splendido Taal Towers are likewise available on pre-selling basis.

Experience the splendor of Tagaytay at Spendido Taal. For inquiries and details, please call 635-0128 / 638-7535 / 634-2295 / 631-3596 / 637-5326 or email : marketing@splendidotaal.com

PROPERTY

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Helping OFWs invest in their future

By Charles E. Buban

CARLO HAS BEEN IN SAUDI ARABIA FOR more than a decade. Working as a foreman as well as other allied works since 1980, he never fails to send his earnings to his family in Cavite.

His hard work and dedication have paid off' as his family's standard of living has improved significantly, able to furnish his home with modern appliances as well as start a taxi and a small buy and sell business.

But despite all these, Carlo believed his efforts were not hard enough as his family still rents their house and that his salary seems to be just sufficient to cover his family expenses, including his six children's education and maintenance of the taxi.

Not alone

"Carlo was not alone in his predicament. I was surprised to hear similar stories from so many overseas Filipino workers (OFW's) met in that Middle Eastern kingdom. They just can't make the right decision on how to invest their valuable money here in the Philippines," reported Elsie Chua, president of CDC Holdings Inc.

CDC Holdings is the investment arm of a group of companies engaged in property development, property management, sales and marketing, and related services.

Chua has been visiting Saudi Arabia as well as other Middle Eastern countries to conduct roadshows for her company's various residential developments here in the Philippines.

"But in my trips there, I often find myself becoming sort of an investment consultant as I am often approached by several OFWs for advice on how to make a long-term investment planning. I told them why invest on fast depreciating consumables like cars or appliances when they should be putting their hard-earned money on properties," Chua said.

Savings

She further explained that buying a residential property can be a form of savings for the future.

"A property with a good appreciation value can yield a good rental income and a good source of money for the proprietor. In the long run, a good property can also be a fallback especially if one needs immediate cash. In case of emergency or crisis, one could also sell the residential unit," explained Chua who added that with the property appreciation and a demand in affordable yet quality residential units, it will be easy to sell a residential unit at a higher price.

She added that as the peso continues to strengthen, OFWs should take this opportunity to invest in properties, which could be a hedge against inflation.

"One could buy a house with a zero installment plan and a good property is valuable for homeowners because of the 8 to 10 percent appreciation value per annum. This could create a steady cash flow and a good rental income for them," Chua advised, adding that banks also offer loans with interest of 10.5 percent fixed to 10 years.

Tie-ups

Considering the number of potential homebuyers in the Middle East region—over 2 million OFWs—Chua needed the help of various Filipino organizations as well as support from the host countries.

"In the case of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where some 1.2 million Filipinos work, we coordinated with the Kapulungan ng mga Samahang Pilipino (Kasapi Congress) and a number of Saudi government and banking officials," reported Charlene Chua, CDC Holdings VP for sales and marketing.

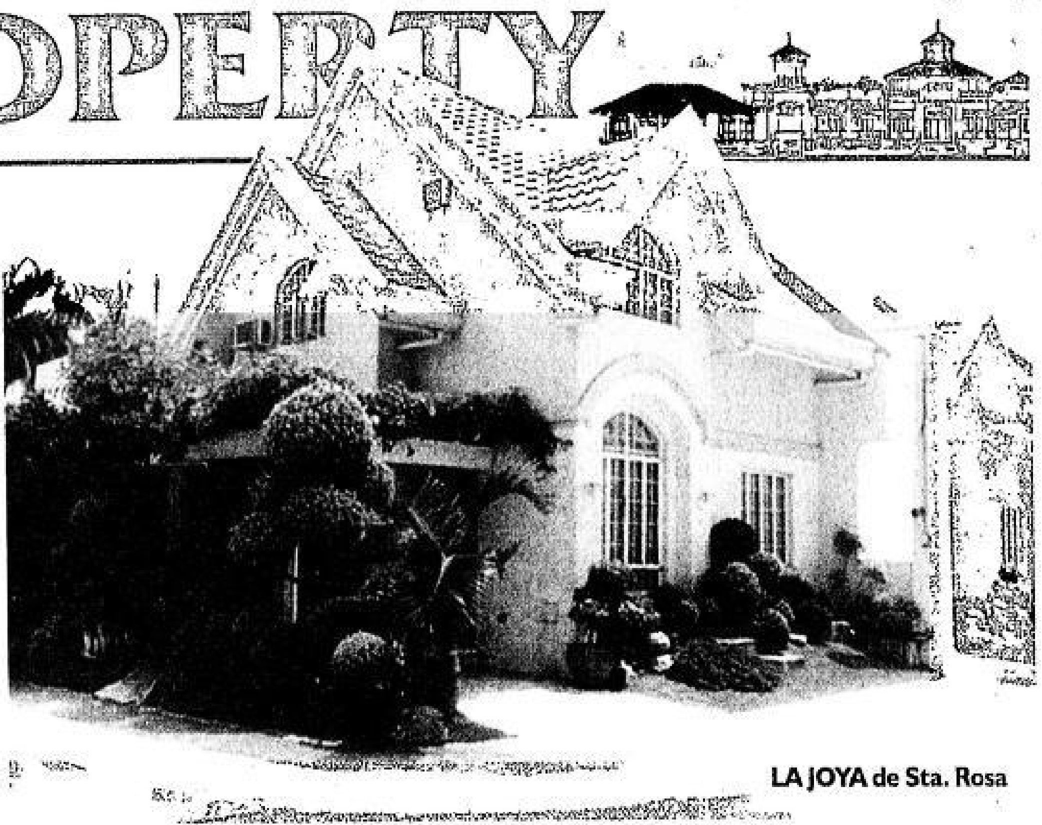
Charlene said they were not just selling house and lot packages to the OFWs but also helping them make long-term investment for example, assisting them in finding individuals or families who would like to rent the house that these OFWs bought, if they are not yet ready to move in.

"The rent could, in fact, be used by the OFW to pay for the monthly amortization," Charlene said.

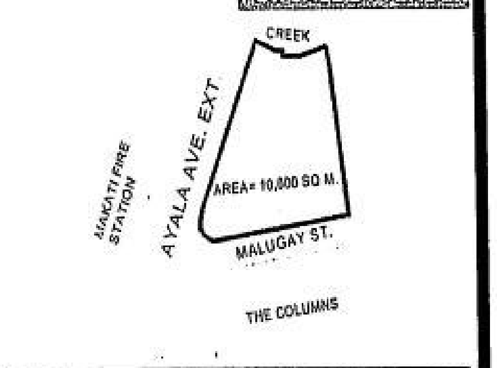
Complete

She added that their company's residential offerings come complete with a partition and a kitchen counter, a 2.6-meterceiling height creating a well-ventilat-

HELPING/ B3-2



LA JOYA de Sta. Rosa



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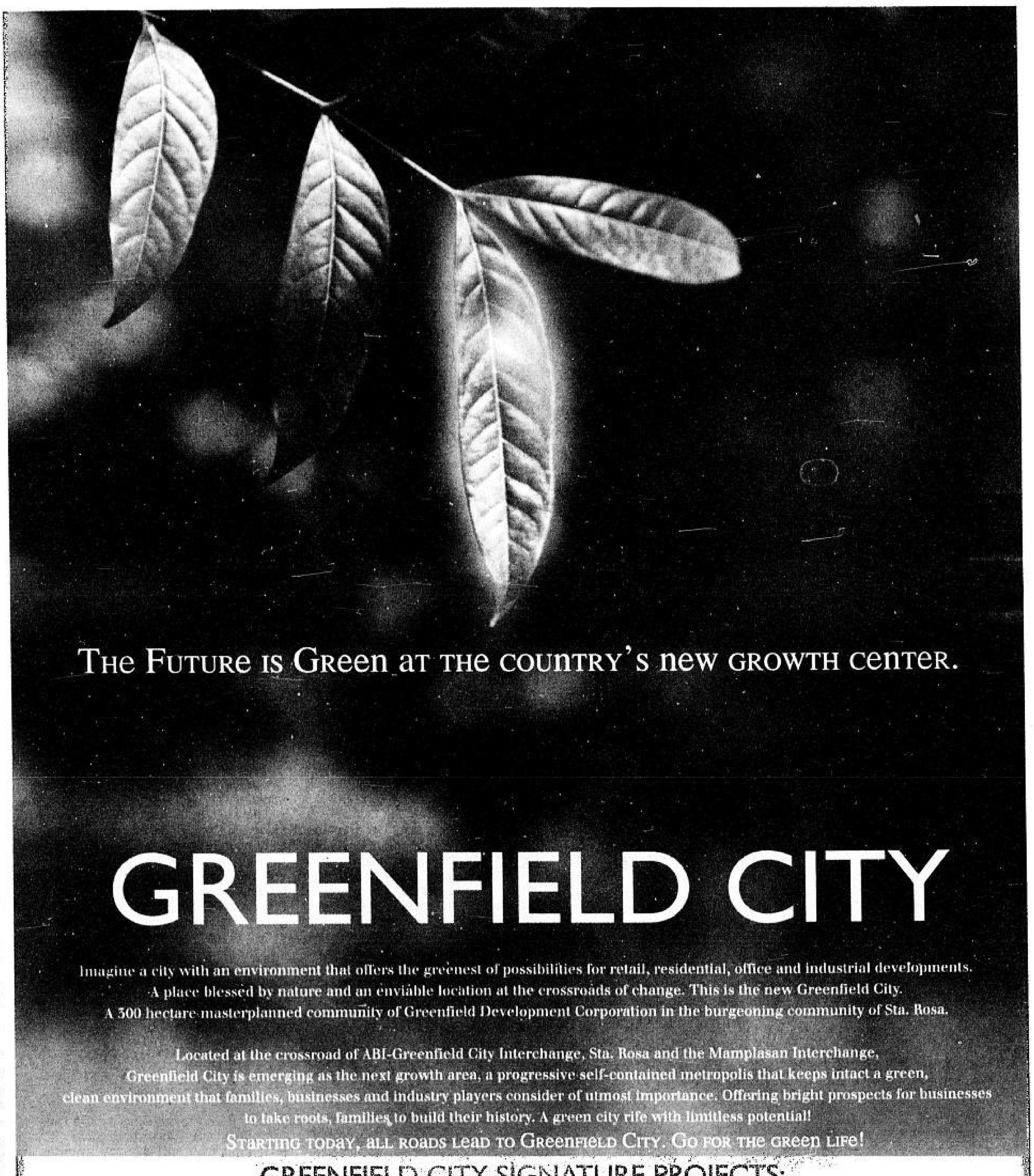

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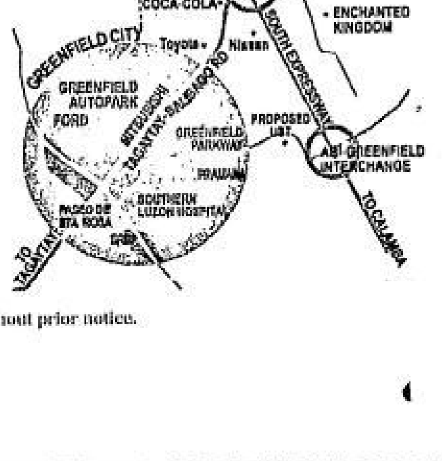

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Energy efficiency and energy modesty

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Amado de Jesus

MODESTY IS DEFINED IN THE DICtionary as humility, shyness or simplicity. It is derived from the Latin word "modestus," which means "keeping within measure." It originally signified moderation, as in Cicero's "golden mean of living." Gradually it took on the connotation of a sexual virtue particularly important for women. Its synonym is temperance which is the habitual moderation in the indulgences of the appetite or passion.

In Japan, where modesty is highly valued, eating habits are no exception, as shown in the old saying "hara hachibunme," which literally means "fill your stomach only 80 percent."

Modesty is a human virtue that implies positive human characteristics. Today modesty has taken on a new shade of meaning as when people say "energy modesty."

What is energy modesty?

Simply put, energy modesty means not taking more than what we need.

The concept evolved as a reaction to what is happening in highly developed and industrialized countries where many people have developed a resource-intensive consumption behavior due to their highly intensive resource program.

Many of these countries have advanced in terms of industrialization, urbanization and consumerism with a strong emphasis on electrification or energy intensity. Unfortunately, in the process of becoming energy-efficient, these nations have overlooked an important ingredient called "energy modesty."

Energy modesty seeks to address common arguments such as why one should save energy, or reduce his or her water consumption, or why one should not waste food.

Practicing energy modesty

By way of illustration, let us say you decide to buy an appliance, say a washing machine or a refrigerator. After sometime, you narrow down your selection to Appliance A, which is a fairly inefficient model that meets your requirements and consumes 400 kWh per year of electricity. The other one is Appliance B, which is energy-efficient, but is twice the size you actually need and consumes 800 kWh.

If you simply want to be energy-efficient, you would choose Appliance B, even if it is twice the size you need. But to practice energy modesty, your best bet would be Appliance A. Why? It meets your needs.

Another illustration would be having the most energy-efficient car but making so many useless and unnecessary trips in effect wasting precious fuel.

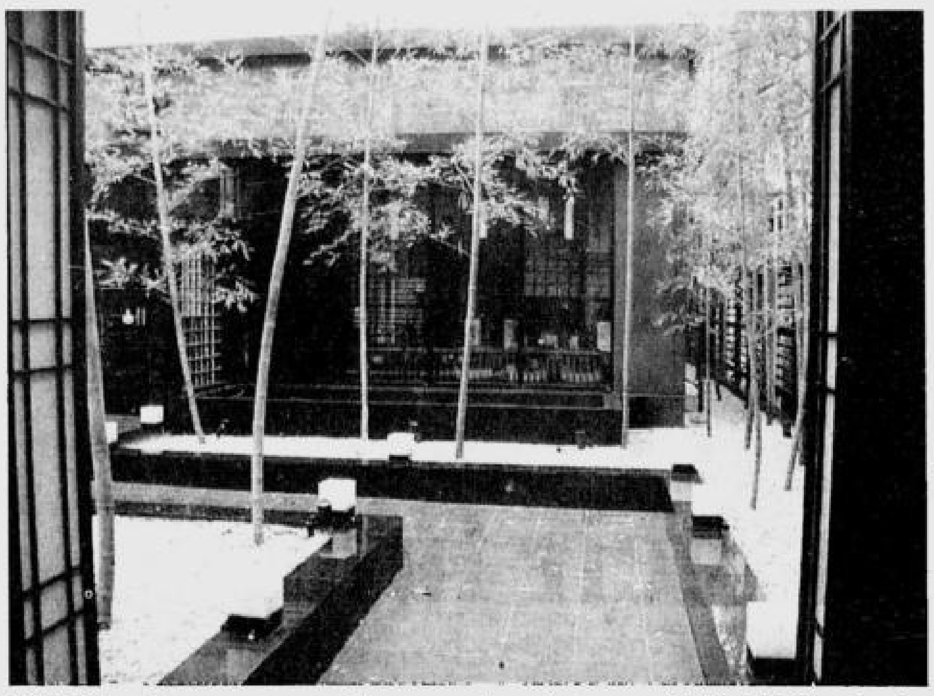
Your home or office could also have the most energy-efficient lights but if you neglect to turn them off when no one is in the room, then you fail to be energy modest.

This is what energy modesty is about. It's more than just being energy-efficient. It's about environmental responsibility. Energy modesty is a global responsibility of all the countries in the world, especially the industrialized countries.

Why practice energy modesty?

It is very easy for many of us to see the immediate effects of our actions on other human beings. Unfortunately, we fail to see its direct effects on our environment. What we fail to realize however, is that human beings are only a small part of nature.

When we increase or reduce our consumption of food, water, energy and other resources, such actions will definitely have a direct impact on our environment.



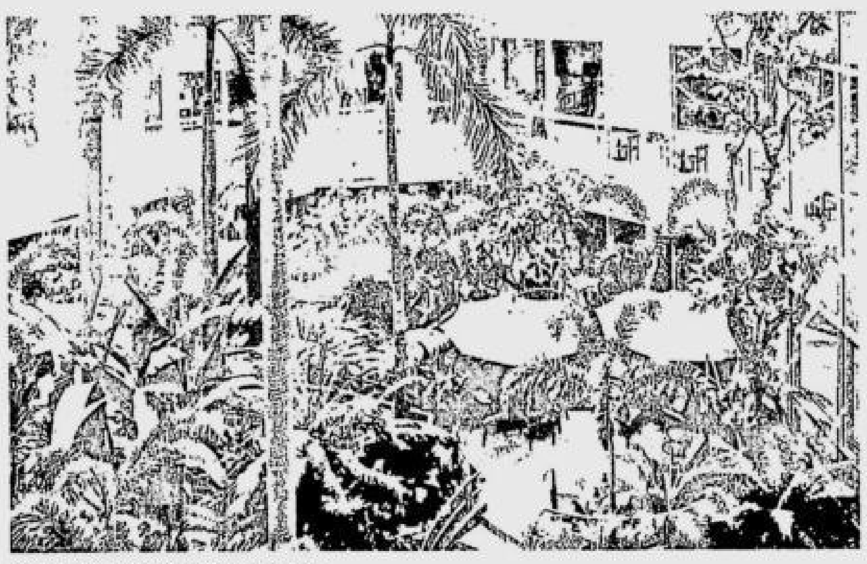
ENERGY modesty means not taking more than what we need. This is highly valued in Japan, not only in their eating habits but also in their homes, as shown this simple garden rendered in minimalist style.

A. P. DE JESUS & ASSOCIATES — GREEN ARCHITECTURE

As we develop a growing awareness of the limitations that nature can provide, it does not make sense to waste any resource out of convenience, indifference or just plain laziness.

If we have to exist in harmony with ourselves and with nature, we must learn to live in moderation and simplicity for we do not have the right to take more than what we need.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com.



THE GATEWAY Mall's Oasis

ONE-BEDROOM model unit's dining area

Refreshing shades of green at Manhattan Garden City

THE PHILIPPINES' FIRST-EVER garden-inspired, transit-oriented community called Manhattan Garden City (MGC) lies right at the heart of the action while being enveloped in a green community all its own.

Established by eminent developer Megaworld Corp., the brainchild behind the marvelous Eastwood City, Manhattan Garden City is a place where communing with nature can be done right at the comfort of one's home. MG's second phase, called Manhattan Parkview, explores special landscaping concepts to give its residents a green way of living.

"Urbanites who are seeking for their own piece of paradise can have it at Manhattan Parkview. It is a welcome respite for residents because it features open spaces, greens and an ambiance that lets the soul breathe. In this world where everything is fast-paced, Manhattan Parkview enjoins individuals to slow down, introspect and enjoy their own quiet time," Megaworld Central Properties Inc. President Anthony Charlemagne Yu said.

Surprises on every corner

Aside from having a nature park experience, Manhattan Parkview also offers surprises on every corner through its landscape details, accents and water features present in its amenities which include parks, small gardens, a fitness station, gym, tennis and basketball courts, jogging pathways, a sauna, jacuzzi, game room, outdoor spa, upscale ground-level retail shops, a daycare center and a children's play area.

First, instead of the manicured gardens artistically arranged in many common locations, the project will feature a tropical garden with free-form planting arrangements.

Mass tropical planting is utilized, creating a micro-environment that gives one a natural feel while walking. Using plants and easily propagated flowers that are ideal for our environment make it easier to maintain and are more familiar to the residents.

"Green" outdoor amenities also serve as screens and buffers to provide privacy for outdoor amenity users. Large foliage and wild flowers, makes one feel like he is out of the city and provides a "soft touch" to the hard landscape.

Green rooftop

This garden-inspired concept not only benefits its residents and their guests but also contributes to environment conservation. Manhattan Parkview, considered as a green rooftop development concept, uses a green rooftop to insulate the building against both heat and cold, using less energy while creating more oxygen.

Find out more by visiting the Manhattan Garden City showroom conveniently located at the 3rd level of Gateway Mall.

Fulfilling the need for high-quality loft living

THE YOUNG, UPWARDLY MOBILE PROfessional is always driven to work hard every day because of a constant desire to achieve an esteemed lifestyle. From getting a dream car, indulging in today's leisure and recreation options, to obtaining branded luxuries, and of course, living in an exclusive condo unit in a prestigious address—every hard-earned peso is saved to acquire all these aspirational items. More than material fulfillment what is more gratifying for an individual is realizing that he or she is finally living "the high life."

This was the vision that inspired Eton Properties Philippines Inc. to put up Eton Emerald Lofts, to cater to the demand for loft condo units among today's market of young professionals, who aspire for the best of what the condo market can offer.

Janet Cordero, AVP for business development of Eton Properties, said Eton Emerald Lofts was developed for the vibrant Ortigas area, after the success of Eton Residences Greenbelt—the first all-loft condominium in Makati.

All-loft residential project

"Eton Emerald Lofts is also the first all-loft residential project in Ortigas. This project was conceptualized to address the apparently growing preference for loft units by city dwellers. It not only provides a more spacious feel for its residents, but also signifies the move to an upgraded lifestyle," Cordero explained.

The 41-story, all-loft, twin-tower condo development will feature wide-view windows to provide residents with an expansive sense of living space—or a more open feel. A sizable retail and amenity podium will likewise cater to the needs of residents while providing the comfort and convenience of having almost everything right below one's home.

"It's high life at an affordable price. The lofts are sized just right and allows for affordability, ranging from 35 to 40 square meters for the one-bedroom and 56-83 sq m for the two-bedroom unit. Unit prices range from P2.2 to P6 million," Cordero said.

For mobile professionals, execs

The project is targeted for the young, upwardly mobile professionals and executives, along with starting families, in search of decent accommodations near their workplace and other city conveniences. Aside from that, the overseas foreign worker (OFW)/balikbayan, who is after value for money options, may also find the property as a viable investment or an end-use requirement.

To further address the demand of its market, the building architecture was specifically developed by Recio + Casas to feature a modern, contemporary façade that mixes aluminum glass and stones. The lines follow the contour and shape of the corner lot, and try to take advantage of as much unhampered views along the streets that bound the property. The amenity level will also have greenery/landscaping that would highlight the facilities, including the swimming pools, function area, and children's play area.

Model units designers

Three different interior designers have been tapped to render the design of the model units. Grace Milan set up a one-bedroom unit in an ultramodern theme, utilizing silver and gray shades, stainless steel and gray leather. Chat Fores rendered another one-bedroom unit in a very hip manner, focusing on functionality fit for the young and upwardly mobile generation, while Joel Songsong, a partner of Songsong and Periquet, designed a two-bedroom unit that is contemporary yet homey, and makes use of earth tones.

Construction of the facility, which sits on a 3,422-sq-m property, is expected to begin by September 2008.

Eton Emerald Lofts (845-3866) offers a variety of payment options, either through spot or deferred cash (interest-free) or bank financing for up to 10 years, for as low as P15,000 a month per unit. It's a fitting privilege to the "live high, fly high" lifestyle that is unique to Eton Emerald Lofts.

Phinma Properties redefining city living

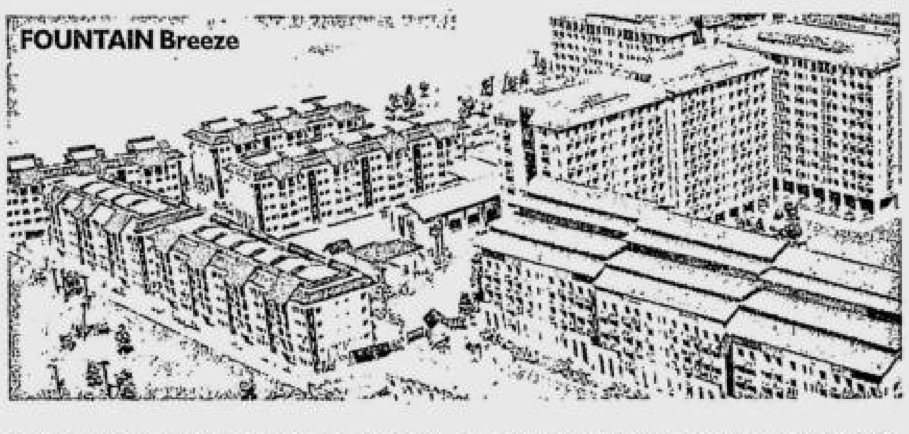
CONDOMINIUM UNITS, OR "condos" as popularly termed, often connotes classy, usually expensive, especially in Manila, boasting prestige and associated with a pampered lifestyle.

This is exclusively true only with the country's recognized leader in affordable condo developing, Phinma Property Holdings Corp. (Phinma Properties).

Smart choice

Buyers investing here should know they are making one of the smartest choices in their lives. The exceptional value obviously shows in the design of the units.

Such features are not usually found in affordable condos. Yet buyers can take advantage of such a rare buying opportunity in affordable pricing terms which start below P700,000 for a 30-square-meter unit. Units may be expanded to 60 or 90 square meters, allowing buyers' flexibility in their living space. Get this chance at the ongoing development in Quezon City, the San Benissa Garden Villas. This rare find is now ready for occupancy.



FOUNTAIN Breeze

The units, though affordably priced, are tied with uncompromising quality guaranteed by the reputable developer's exceptional track record.

Achievements

With more than 5,000 premium condo units developed, Phinma Properties no doubt deserves to be the first and only developer in the country with triple ISO certification for the quality, environmental and occupational safety and health management system. To add to its achievement, Superbrand Philippines Awards last year bestowed the company the prime "Superbrand" award, recognizing its successful performance on affordability and quality, on par with other renowned companies globally.

Recently, the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board granted Phinma Properties the "National Awardee and Expanded National Capital Region (ENCR) Awardee as Leading Developer in Medium-cost Condominiums. Phinma Properties' Spazio Bernardo project received the Best Condo Design Award, a testament to the company's goal of delivering high-quality developments beyond what buyers could expect for the price.

Most ambitious project

Now Phinma Properties goes a step further in creating masterplanned communities with its most ambitious project to date, Fountain Breeze. The urban expanse is strategically positioned right at the heart of Sucat, Parañaque.

The township comes with provisions for parking buildings and distinguished amenities such as a swimming pool, clubhouse, badminton court and playgrounds, that will totally explore its slogan—Complete Lifestyle, One Address...

Good life, luxury in the South define Carmel Ridge

CARMEL RIDGE RESIDENTIAL Estates is the perfect dwelling for a good life in the South. With its residential enclaves in a 40-hectare property, Sta. Lucia Realty and Development Inc. provides luxury and convenience in the middle of a fast-paced suburban life, at the same time cushioning the rush with a nurturing ambience resting on the majestic view of Mt. Makiling.

Located in the secure perimeter of Carmelray Industrial Park II, an upscale business square in Calamba, Laguna, Carmel Ridge is accessible to schools, commercial centers and most work places in the area, with public transportation available 24 hours a day.

Its functional features comprise of recreational and sports facilities that include a multi-purpose clubhouse, basketball and tennis courts, and a swimming pool.

Completing the overall development are the fully landscaped gate and parks, shade trees along its roads, and restaurants.

Orchard Property Marketing Corp. (635-4946) is the marketing arm of Sta. Lucia Realty for Carmel Ridge and other developments.

Helping OFWs . . .

From page B3-1

ed room, painted finish, aluminum windows, a spacious hallway, limited units per floor and painted finished surfaces.

"Even the whole development is self-contained so the homebuyer only needs to move in. We also provide property management through the Quadrillion Property Management and the Somerset Quadrillion Resources that assure our OFW homebuyers of a well-maintained and ready-to-lease out properties," she said.

Charlene said the company is offering the same with other OFWs in other regions like Europe, Eastern Asia, Australia and the United States.

"We now have offices and networks in several countries so that coordination is not a problem for our OFWs," she said.

The properties developed by CDC Holdings include the residential subdivision La Joya de Sta. Rosa in Laguna, condominium Lions Park Residences in Parañaque City, townhouse Quadrillion Villas in San Juan City, single-detached La Louviere in San Juan City and residential/commercial Quadrillion Mansion also in San Juan City, high-rise buildings 139 Corporate Center, Somerset Millennium and Millennium Plaza, all in Makati City.

AWESOME STRUCTURES

By Emman Cena

Yet another crooked

DIGGING ARCHIVES AND whathaveyou, INQUIRER Property was surprised to have come across yet another crooked structure, just like what we had featured last week.

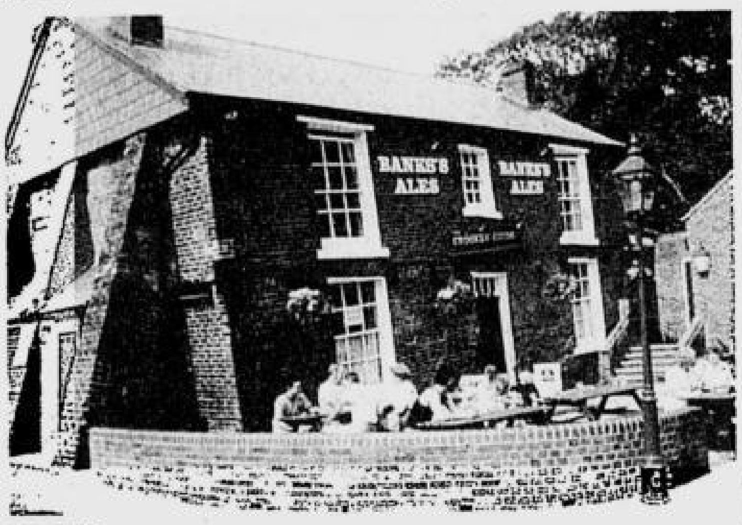
Known as the Siden House (Siden being Black Country dialect for crooked), the building which sits in the Gornal region, England, is actually a pub house, funnily believed to induce dizziness via experiences of optical illusions, including marbles rolling uphill and drinks sliding up the table.

Aptly said to be the Britain's answer to The Leaning Tower of Pisa, the whole building leans at approximately 15° from level, and makes for a most interesting exterior and interior alike.

Built in 1765 as a farmhouse, the area on which it was built was extensively mined for coal. In the mid 1800s, there was a huge subsidence problem, and the southern half of the building sank by several feet. Amazingly, the building survived.

Today, the pub is a thriving meeting place for locals as well as a minor tourist attraction. The vertical parts of the window and door frames are vertical, but the horizontals slope with the building. There are new extensions—one for toilets and kitchen, and the other for a large dining room and bar. The new parts of the building were built level, although the window from the dining room to the bar is confusing.

(References:
http://www.everything2.com,
http://www.beerintheevening.com/pubs)



SIDEN House

HEAD home to relax while surrounded by warm hues and quaint design details.

THE SPANISH-INSPIRED Andalusia is San Fernando's first exclusive, themed residential community.

Communities Philippines' Andalusia, canvas of Spanish architecture in San Fernando

PAMPANGA IS THE GATEWAY TO MANY major provinces in the North with its strategic location in the heart of Central Luzon. San Fernando City, the bustling capital of the country's culinary center, becomes the perfect site of the latest masterplanned development of Communities Philippines.

A proud subsidiary of Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., Communities Philippines is the expert in converting the countryside into a landscape of sought-after enclaves and the first Manila-based developer to expand operations into key cities and municipalities across the country. Vista Land is the Philippines' largest homebuilder offering the broadest spectrum of homes for all income segments and catering to different lifestyles across the entire country.

First themed residential dev't

Andalusia is the first themed residential development to rise in San Fernando City. It takes inspiration from Andalucia, a region in southern Spain known for its rich culture and a famous leisure destination around the world. Communities Philippines' Andalusia is an 8-hectare enclave envisioned to satisfy individuals who have the passion for quiet elegance, sophisticated architecture, and desire for a comfortable lifestyle.

SOPHISTICATED dining experiences in your own home.

Every Andalusia home draws inspiration from Spanish-Moorish architecture which features intricate decorative details, warm palette, stucco archways and tiled courtyards.

5 home models

Five model homes are available from the Luxuria Home Series, each carefully designed to maximize space and address unique living requirements, with floor areas ranging from 92 to 250 square meters.

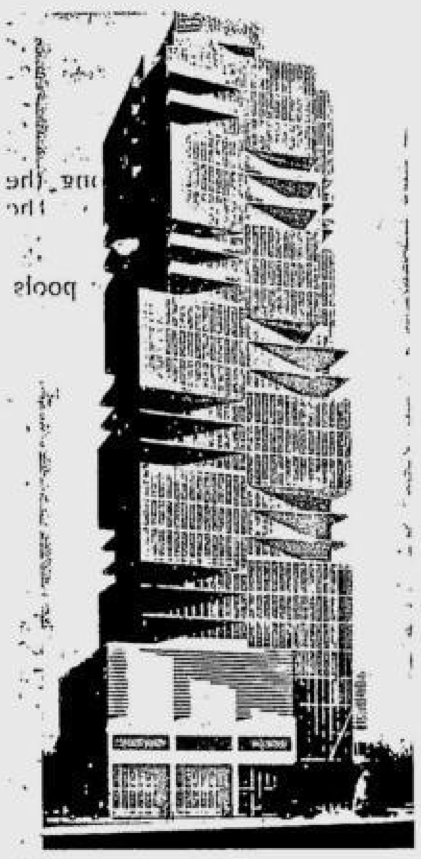
Residents are sure to enjoy the leisurely life and relax just outside their homes with Andalusia's exclusive facilities and amenities such as a clubhouse, swimming pool and lushly landscaped courtyards and fountain parks. Round-the-clock security systems will also keep residents at ease while inside the community. A commercial area will rise to make Andalusia a complete and self-sustaining community.

Strategic location

Andalusia is found on McArthur Hi-way, San Agustin, San Fernando City, a strategic location since it is a major thoroughfare to the city's commercial and business center. It is just 30 minutes away from the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport and a few kilometers away from the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway.

This highlight makes it a great advantage for constant travelers abroad and across the country. Likewise, it has easy access to the city's commercial establishments such as SM Pampanga and Robinsons Starmills, and is near prime schools and medical facilities.

Bellevue expansion projects underway



THE NEW Executive Tower boasts of 250 luxury rooms with The Bellevue's trademark panache for magnificence.

RECOGNIZING THE EXPONENTIAL need and demand of luxury and business accommodations in the bustling Muntinlupa and upscale Alabang area, The Bellevue Hotel is stepping up to the challenge. With three expansion projects for the South and a beach resort underway, The Bellevue is redefining boundaries and changing the face of the hotel industry once more.

"With the very large volume of corporate accounts and long staying guests from Laguna, Cavite, Batangas, Alabang, Muntinlupa and Parañaque, the demand for rooms is exceptionally high, prompting us to create a new wing to cope with the booming market," says Ryan Chan, marketing and communications director of Bellevue. The Bellevue Executive Tower is expected to fill in this void with its 250 rooms, capping the hotel's room count to 470.

Expected to open by the first quarter of 2009, the Executive Tower builds on the strengths and beauty of its predecessor and adds a bit more. Bellevue General Manager Patrick Chan states that with the Executive Tower, "we are giving back to the community whose continued patronage made us who we are. We are giving a whole new Bellevue experience of comfort and luxury."

Architecture

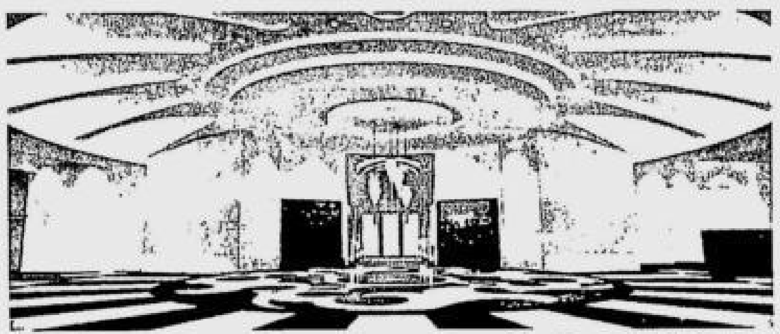
The Executive Tower's architecture is done by architects Esteban and Gavino Tan with its interiors by architect Arlen de Guzman , the same team behind the original and stately Bellevue Hotel. The new wing boasts of a rich Asian-inspired design mixed with postmodern interiors, evoking a sense of beauty and timelessness.

Aside from its luxurious rooms, the Executive Tower will also have two specialty dining outlets—a Chinese restaurant with a seating capacity of 200 guests and a Japanese/Korean one for 100—providing a rich multicultural dining experience. Its leisure bar boasts of a two-story wine cellar as well as an outdoor area to chill out and listen to good music. Designed to give the most comfortable stay a hotel can give in Metro Manila, The Bellevue brings to reality the vision of ultimate comfort and convenience.

Adding to The Bellevue's family of hotels is a smaller one with 150 rooms to be built at the heart of the business district of Alabang at Madrigal Business Park. Targeted for cost-conscious businessmen and travelers, the smaller hotel will still have the quality, standards and class of the original property but with more selective services and amenities, without sacrificing the trademark Bellevue quality and space every guest needs.

High-end residence

With the prevalence of the tourism and retirement market, The Bellevue is also set to build their very own high-end residence named The Bellevue Residences. To rise beside the Executive Tower, The Residences will feature one-, two- and three-bedroom units and is geared to be a high-end premium residence, complete with its own spa, gym and swimming pool.



THE MAJESTIC grand lobby of the new Executive Tower is all about elegance and sophistication.

Only 150-200 units will be built to ensure spacious units for each resident in the 26-story tower. The Bellevue Residences is envisioned to be the South's icon building, representing the thriving and flourishing locale of Alabang.

Luxury haven

After dominating the Southern market, The Bellevue sets its sights on the island paradise of Bohol. With the groundbreaking of the resort tentatively set on the first quarter of 2008, the masterplan for the luxury resort is to have 200 rooms, including beachfront villas.

To be designed by Recio-Casas, the resort will offer a 200-meter beachfront, 2 swimming pools, including a 4-meter dive pool, a rejuvenating spa village and a majestic ballroom good for 300 people. Located 15 minutes away from the airport, Bellevue Bohol is gearing up to be the luxury haven at Panglao's virgin beach paradise. For those looking for their own romantic island getaway, each ocean villa will have a private plunge pool and their special beachfront honeymoon suite will have its own infinity pool.

From conquering the Alabang market to the verdant landscape of Bohol, The Bellevue continually reshapes satisfaction and luxury. With an unwavering commitment to serving the needs of the community, The Bellevue shines on and adds a touch of class to our lives.

Fulfill your dream at Robinsons Pioneer Cybergate complex

ROBINSONS mall

AIMING TO GIVE STARTUP families new wholesome and exciting lifestyle options, Robinsons Land Corp. is presenting its mixed-use development property in the burgeoning Edsa-Pioneer Mandaluyong area as the ideal and practical choice for those looking for a home that will enable them and their loved ones to get the best out of life.

RLC's Pioneer Cybergate projects include the prime residential condominiums in Gateway Garden Heights, Gateway Garden Ridge and One Gateway Place, as well as office buildings of Cybergate Center (Towers 1-3) and the Robinsons Place Pioneer Mall. All these combine to give the Pioneer community and its peripheral areas a 360-degree lifestyle experience of business, residential and recreational activities in one vibrant complex.

Strategic location

It is common for both spouses in startup families to be working professionals, and this is perfectly complemented by Robinsons Pioneer Complex's strategic location. Families living in Gateway Garden Heights, Gateway Garden Ridge and One Gateway Place will have quick and direct access to both the Makati and Ortigas Central Business Districts through the MRT Boni Station, which is just a few minutes' walk away from these condominiums. For families with young children, this also provides reasonable access to the best schools located in the Makati, Ortigas and Greenhills areas.

An even more convenient arrangement would be for professionals who work in Cybergate Center's three towers. For these heads of families, a hot meal and a warm bath are available within minutes and would be a wonderful reward at the end of a day of hard work. And the constant assurance that their homes are secure and just within reach will surely put worried parents' minds at ease and enable them to focus on their tasks and become efficient employees.

Residents of Gateway Garden Heights, Gateway Garden Ridge and One Gateway Place have access to amenities that promote a healthy lifestyle, including wide landscaped gardens and swimming pools. Young children from startup families can play in the pool in the afternoons or work their extra energies off in a fun way at the playground. Adults also need to keep active, especially since they spend most of their days in hermetically sealed office environments, so fathers and mothers can make frequent use of the fitness center after work or on weekends.

For more information on Robinsons Land's landmark development projects and its new move in quick plan known as Super Easy Home, you may visit www.robinsonsproperties.com.ph, e-mail properties@robinsonsland.com or call 636-0888, 0922-838-0888 or 0922-814-0917.

The SM experience: conserving a most precious resource

POLLUTION, CLIMATE CHANGE AND the ever-increasing demand of a burgeoning population are blamed for the creeping water shortage.

The World Bank's Philippine Environment Monitor in 2003 placed the Philippine economy's losses due to water pollution at P67 billion a year. Equally alarming, some 18 to 25 Filipinos die each day because of water pollution which also impact on government's scarce health budget.

Safe water has become so precious such that households allot a substantial chunk of family budget for water fit for drinking and cooking.

Alarming state

Such is the alarming state of the country's freshwater industry. While it is government's call to provide the public with such basic necessity as water, the private sector must also pitch it share.

A more effective water management system in the light of worsening water pollution and the demands of an unregulated population boom has become an urgent task that needs the full attention of both the government and the private sector.

SM Prime Holdings, owner of the country's largest network of shopping malls, has started a campaign that reduces its water usage by over 1,000 tons every year.

By replacing the traditional urinals with Falcon Water-free Urinals, all SM Mall branches nationwide can save up to 1,431 tons of water each year which is equivalent to 260 water trucks per day.

At present, out of its 28 shopping malls nationwide, 24 are already using a total of 2,205 Falcon Water-free Urinals. Falcon's concept of water conservation using water-free urinals is expected to dominate the high traffic toilets in establishments that include shopping malls, fast-food chains, gas stations, cinemas and bus terminals.

SM targets to save up to 250 million liters of water every year and bring it back to host communities nationwide.

Sewerage system

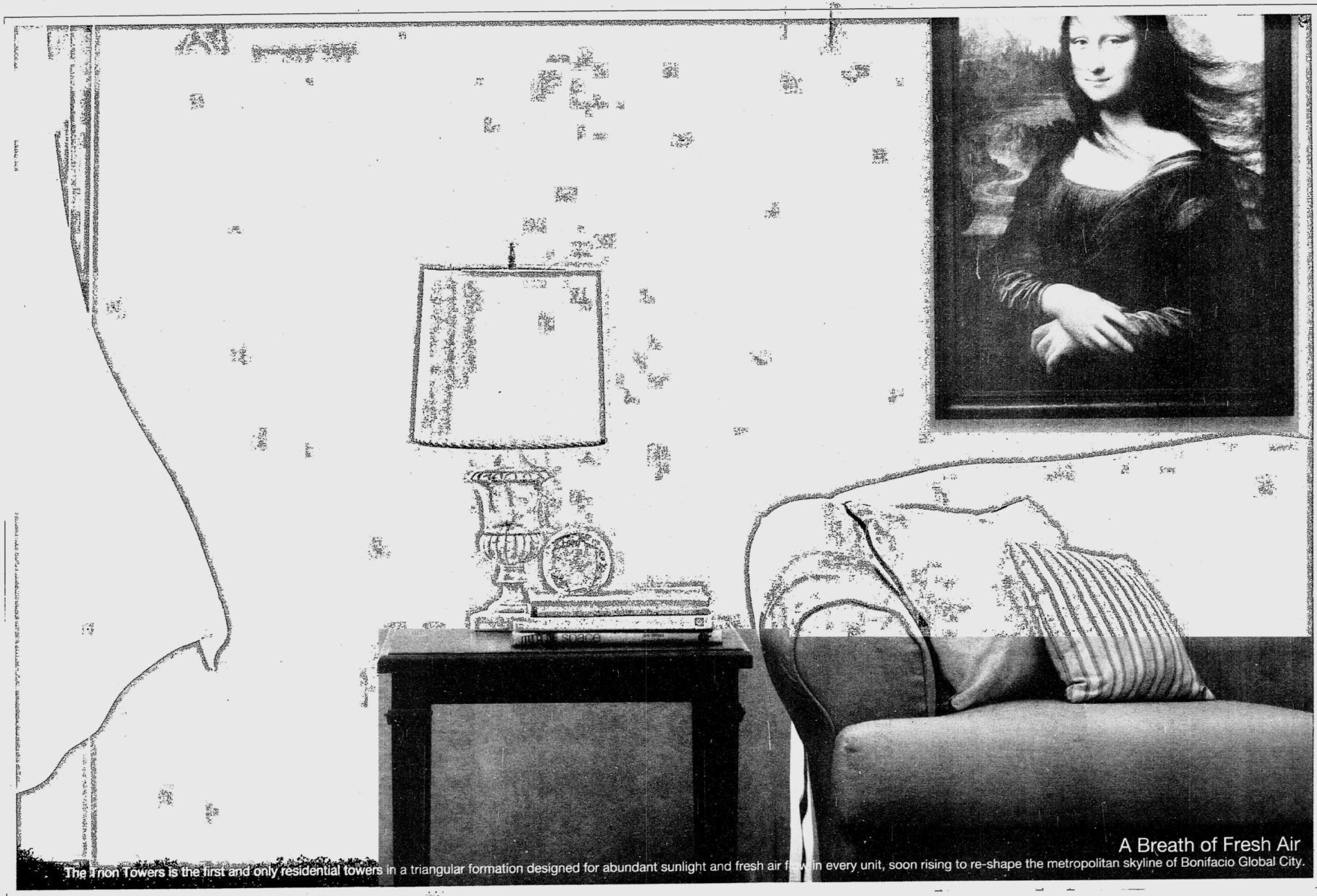
While SM Malls have sewer treatment plants in all their malls, their treated effluent which they release to the environment will mix up again with the polluted rivers and streams because of the absence of sewerage system.

SM Supermalls is currently on track in complying to the water conservation and water treatment call of the government.

In SM Megamall and SM North Edsa alone where there are 200 and 142 public urinals respectively, their water savings go as high as 400 tons per day which is equivalent to 72 water trucks.

According to Bien Mateo, SM Supermalls assistant vice president, the use of an innovative water-free urinals enable the company to post substantial savings aside from generating goodwill in their host community.

"We hope to cover all our mall branches in the next few months. This water conservation program is our way of taking care of a very precious resource that would eventually benefit our host cities and communities nationwide," Mateo said.



A Breath of Fresh Air

The Trion Towers is the first and only residential towers in a triangular formation designed for abundant sunlight and fresh air flow in every unit, soon rising to re-shape the metropolitan skyline of Bonifacio Global City.

THE TRION TOWERS

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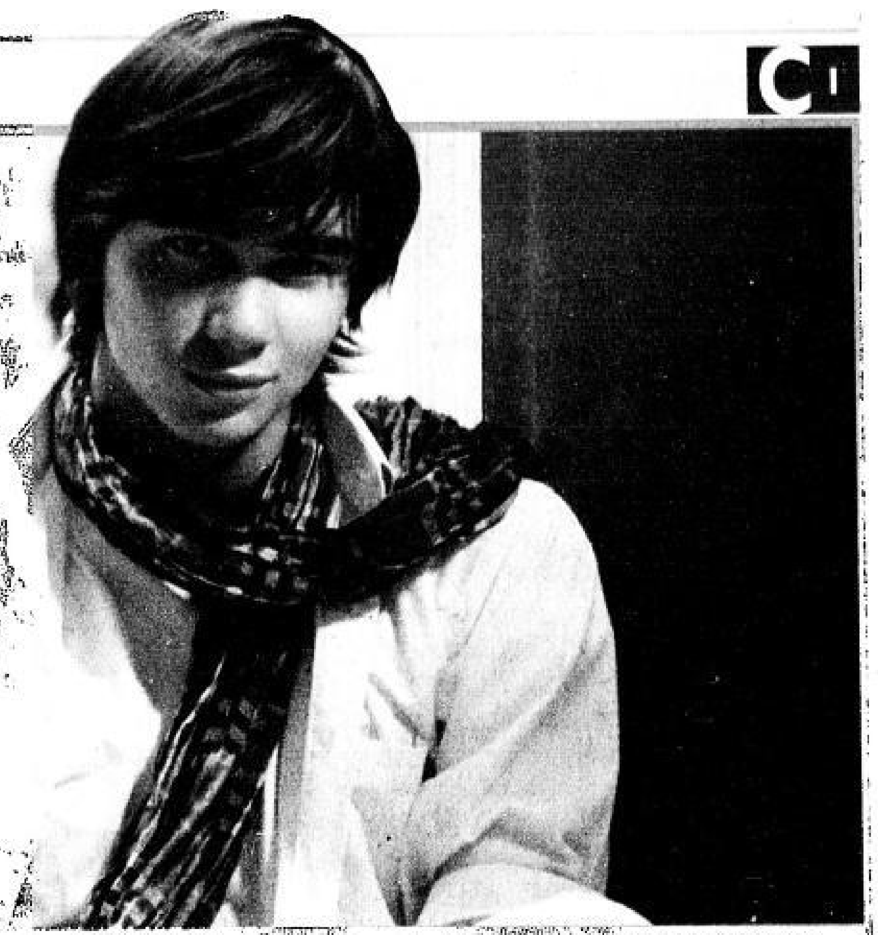


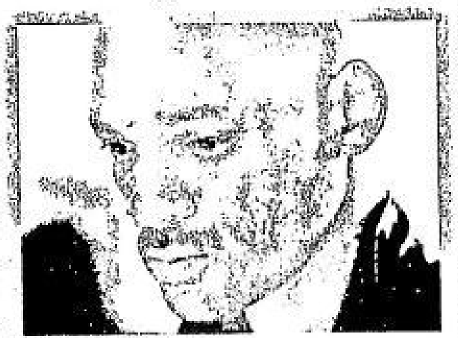
This week Super means Scotch tape• Unwrap• Pambalot• Exchange• Ribbon

KRIS KRINGLE WITH SUPER

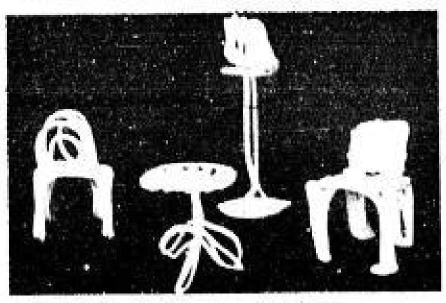
FLY WITH SUPER ▷▷
Pilot: Pam Pastor · Co-Pilot: Katrina A. Holigores · First Officers: Tals Diaz, James Gabrillo, Wanggo Gallaga, Juana Manahan, Paolo Reyes · Air Traffic Controller: Abel Ulanday · Cabin Crew: Belen Belesario, L.A. Mistades · Ground Control: Ma-ann Ayos, Rissa Camongol, Lilie Lazaro

James & the giant pitch

by Wanggo Gallaga



Will in Grace

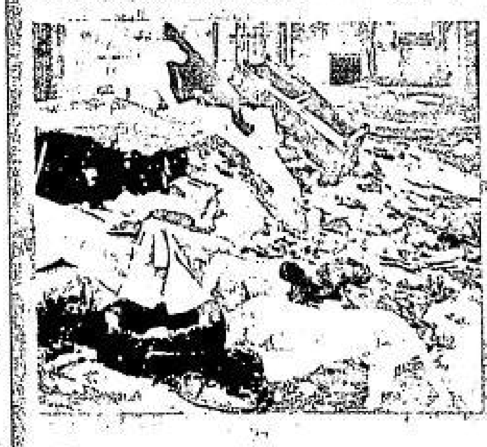


Give from the Art

by James Gabrillo

Very Important 'Pataygutom'

by Tals Diaz



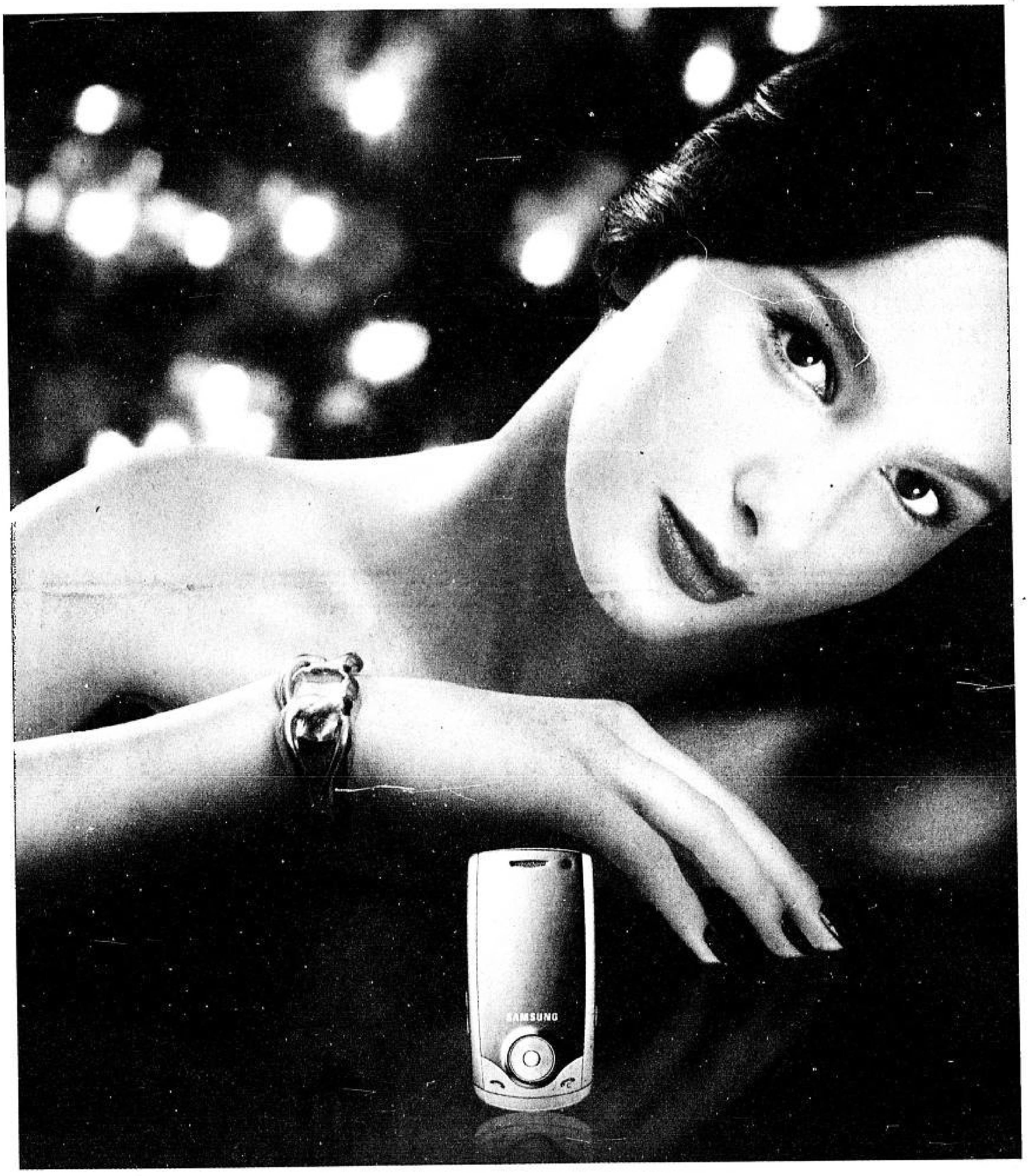
Caught on tape

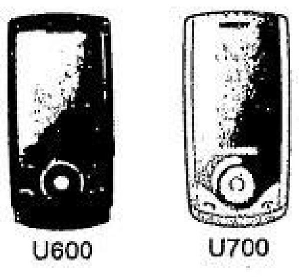
by Paolo Reyes

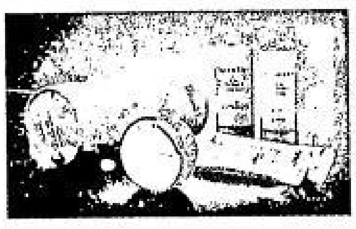
Sushi hopper

by Juana Manahan

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARA BLACK
STYLING BY JUANA MANAHAN
GROOMING BY XENG ZULUETA FOR SHU UEMURA
HAIR BY BEA MISA FOR KIEHL'S
ALL CLOTHING FROM SAHARA







imagine this season's most stylish gift

Samsung gives you this exclusive and limited offer. Every purchase of the U600 and the U700 within the promo period of December 5 – 25, 2007, at participating dealers nationwide, entitles you to a Bvlgari gift pack which will be given upon purchase of the phone. With Samsung, it's not that hard to imagine.

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Hey! big spender

By Wanggo Gallaga

ATHLETES BECOME MODELS. It makes perfect sense: They have the necessary physique to look great in photos, their bodies are well-sculpted from hours of training, they have a dedicated fan base who would want anything that is associated with them or with the sport they excel in and, if they aren't training, they have time on their hands.

From one great big paycheck to another, athletes-turned-models are part of the upper tier in the consumer pyramid which makes us hate them more. Not only do they get paid an insane salary to do something they really, really love; they end up becoming endorsers as well.

Fil-Brit James Younghusband is one such lucky guy. Playing football for Chelsea in the UK, James has also found gold in the Philippines as a model, endorsing clothing company Sahara. James has been working since he was playing football at age 16. When asked about the assumption that athletes get paid a lot, his quick response was, "Yeah, especially in England." He's been spending his own money while most people his age in the Philippines were negotiating allowance raises with their parents in preparation for college. If anyone knows how to enjoy money well-earned, it's a teenager with a huge savings account.

Christmas is James's favorite holiday. "Because you get a lot of presents," he says with a laugh. "No, I really like spending time with my family and getting a little break from work," he adds.

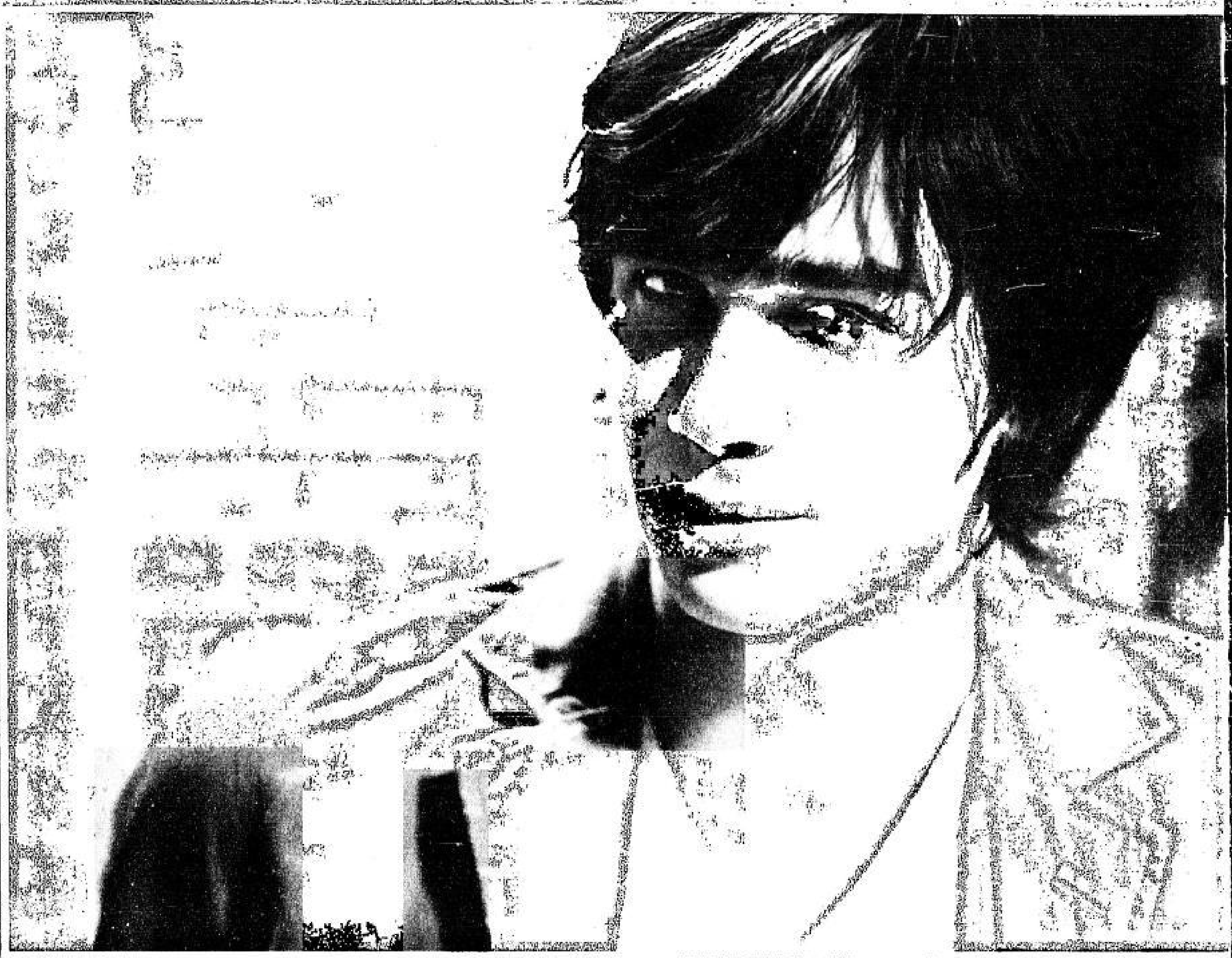
So how does the big spender prepare for Christmas? James answers some questions about gifts and gift-giving:

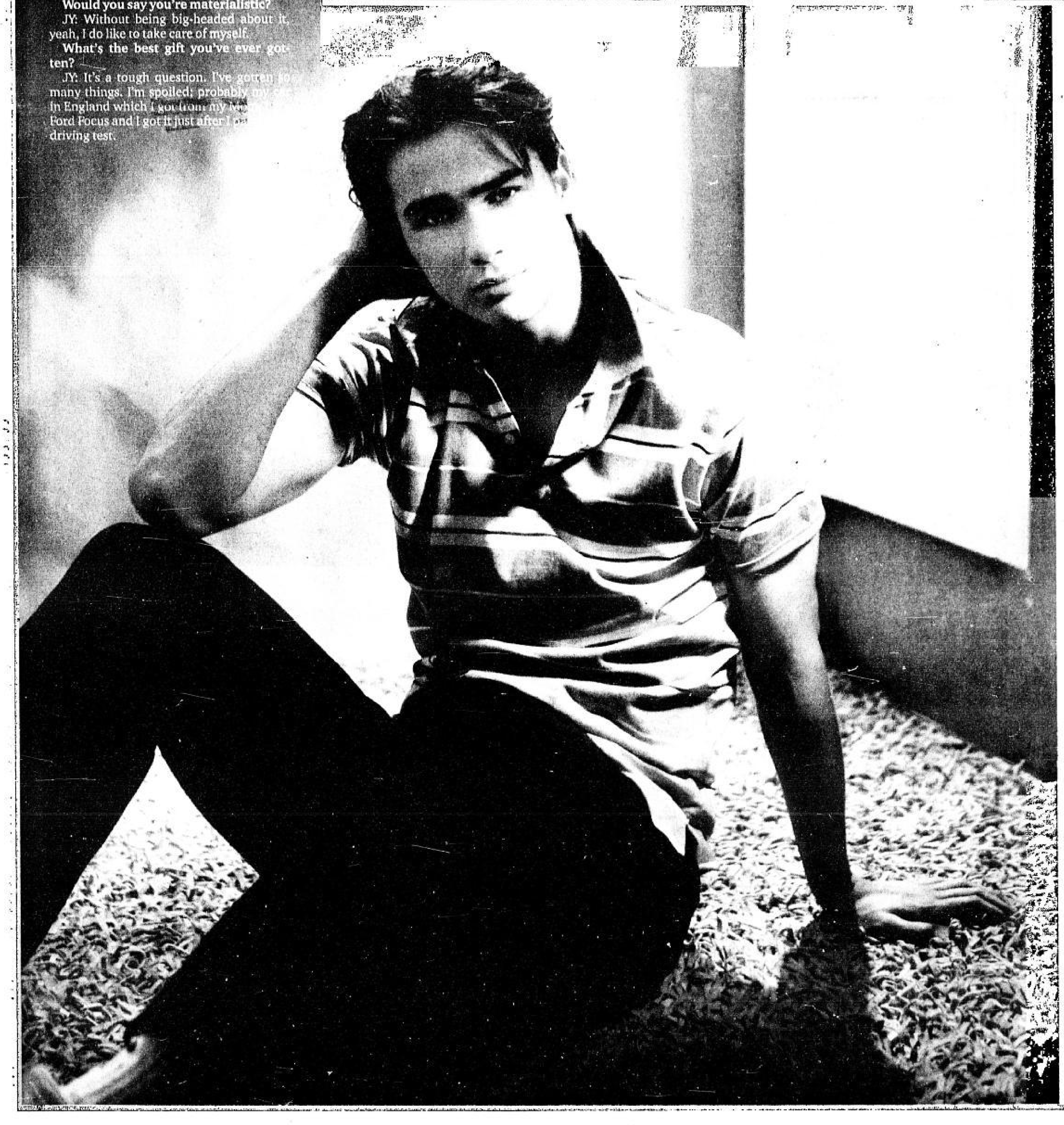
Would you say you're materialistic?

JY: Without being big-headed about it, yeah, I do like to take care of myself.

What's the best gift you've ever gotten?

JY: It's a tough question. I've gotten so many things. I'm spoiled; probably my car in England which I got from my [illegible] Ford Focus and I got it just after I [illegible] driving test.





What's the mo
bought for yoursel

JY: I bought a v
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What's the mo
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JY: I treated my
the best spa in Engl
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Do you shop a lo

JY: Yeah. When y
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What do you usu

JY: Clothes, mo
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Are you preppy
you fashionable?

JY: Preppy. I like
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Are you into gad

JY: Yeah, I am. V
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friends. I got like pl
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I started playing it s
got a little sore.

Now that you're
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more money. Is th
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JY: Actually, now
I'm thinking about
when I was younger
now, I'm thinking
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How does it feel

JY: It's good, real
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are some things yo
and it's nice when y
It makes a change
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still and relax, really

Does that chang
you were making
of money at just 16

JY: When I was y
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start saving.

Do you like Chris

JY: I love it, actu
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family. It gives us so

Do you think th
sumer holiday? D
thing?

JY: No, no ... Ev
it's all business and
living.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Hey! big spender

By Wanggo Gallaga

ATHLETES BECOME MODELS. It makes perfect sense: They have the necessary physique to look great in photos, their bodies are well-sculpted from hours of training, they have a dedicated fan base who would want anything that is associated with them or with the sport they excel in and, if they aren't training, they have time on their hands.

From one great big paycheck to another, athletes-turned-models are part of the upper tier in the consumer pyramid which makes us hate them more. Not only do they get paid an insane salary to do something they really, really love; they end up becoming endorsers as well.

Fil-Brit James Younghusband is one such lucky guy. Playing football for Chelsea in the UK, James has also found gold in the Philippines as a model, endorsing clothing company Sahara. James has been working since he was playing football at age 16. When asked about the assumption that athletes get paid a lot, his quick response was, "Yeah, especially in England." He's been spending his own money while most people his age in the Philippines were negotiating allowance raises with their parents in preparation for college. If anyone knows how to enjoy money well-earned, it's a teenager with a huge savings account.

Christmas is James's favorite holiday. "Because you get a lot of presents," he says with a laugh. "No, I really like spending time with my family and getting a little break from work," he adds.

So how does the big spender prepare for Christmas? James answers some questions about gifts and gift-giving:

Would you say you're materialistic?

JY: Without being big-headed about it, yeah, I do like to take care of myself.

What's the best gift you [illegible] ten?

JY: It's a tough question [illegible] many things I'm [illegible] in England which [illegible] Ford Focus and I got [illegible] driving.

What's the mo bought for yoursel

JY: I bought brand. It's a tho really like and I jus my house and I ca casions.

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JY: I treated the best spa in E quid.

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JY: When I w vantage of it a taught me as w start saving.

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JY: I love it, though, with all th like it, though, family. It gives

Do you think t sumer holiday? D thing?

JY: No, no it's all business living.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Footballer and model James Younghusband kicks it with Super

›t expensive thing you ?

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nd pounds. It's a watch I
treated myself to it. It's in
bring it out for special oc-

›t expensive thing you ›dy else?

nom to a spa. It was like
›nd. It costs me about 400

t?

›u're a football player you
› until like lunch time or
and you have the rest of
›u get quite bored so you
›pping.

›ally shop for?

›tly. I have a bad habit.
didn't really think about
pretty much spent every-

or are you punk? Are

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›ble. I like the nice brands
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gets?

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›f saving up for my own
›e able to take people out,
with my friends.

like being a model?

›ly. It's nice when you get
being paid as well. There
› want and you can't get
›u get them. It's good fun.
rom running around and
›'s nice being able to sit

› how you grew up, that
a considerable amount
years of age?

›unger, I kind of took ad-
›ent it all but I think that
taught me that I need to

›tmas shopping?

›lly. It's a bit of a hassle,
traffic and it's crowded. I
›ially when I do it with the
nething to do together.

›at Christmas is a con-
› you think it's a bad

›ryone loves money and
everyone's got to make a

Anmum™

Specially formulated for breastfeeding moms

Mothers are recommended to drink 2 glasses of Anmum Lacta everyday to support their increased nutritional needs during breastfeeding.

ANMUM LACTA is specially formulated to help breastfeeding mothers meet their Recommended Energy and Nutrient Intake (RENI). A product of Fonterra Brands Philippines, ANMUM LACTA helps in maintaining the nutritional composition of breast milk while replenishing maternal stores during the post-natal period. ANMUM LACTA is a good source of Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B12, Folate, Calcium, Iron, and Vitamin A. It also contains Sialic Acid (SA) and Essential Fatty Acids (EFA), precursors of. DHA and AA, which are important nutrients for your baby's brain development.

BREASTFEEDING
BEST for BABY
BEST for MOMM

Getting ready for breastfeeding

By Dr. Ma. Carmen Hernandez-Quevedo, FPOGS
FEU-NRMF Medical Center

A pregnant or breastfeeding mother has to maintain a healthy diet to be able to provide enough nutrition to her baby and to herself. This will help her produce quality breast milk that will nourish her child.

Breastfeeding is a once in a lifetime experience a mother can share with her child. And although most mothers are aware of its benefits, the attrition rate among breastfeeding mothers remains high.

This is usually due to lack of commitment on the part of the mother. Breastfeeding poses several challenges, and if the mother is not aware of these, her resolve to provide her baby with the best source of nourishment may weaken. A breastfeeding mom should be physically and emotionally ready for the experience. This is especially true for first-time mothers.

Physical preparation should start with proper nutrition. A pregnant or breastfeeding woman is not advised to go on a slimming diet. She has to maintain a healthy diet to be able to give enough nutrition for her baby as well as for her own reserves. This will help her produce quality breast milk that will nourish her child. There is no need to worry about not losing extra weight because breastfeeding makes losing weight easier and faster.

To make sure mothers get the right nutrient concentration and quality, a maternal milk supplement especially formulated for breastfeeding women is highly recommended. This is to ensure that they get all the essential nutrients they need to produce enough, high quality breast milk.

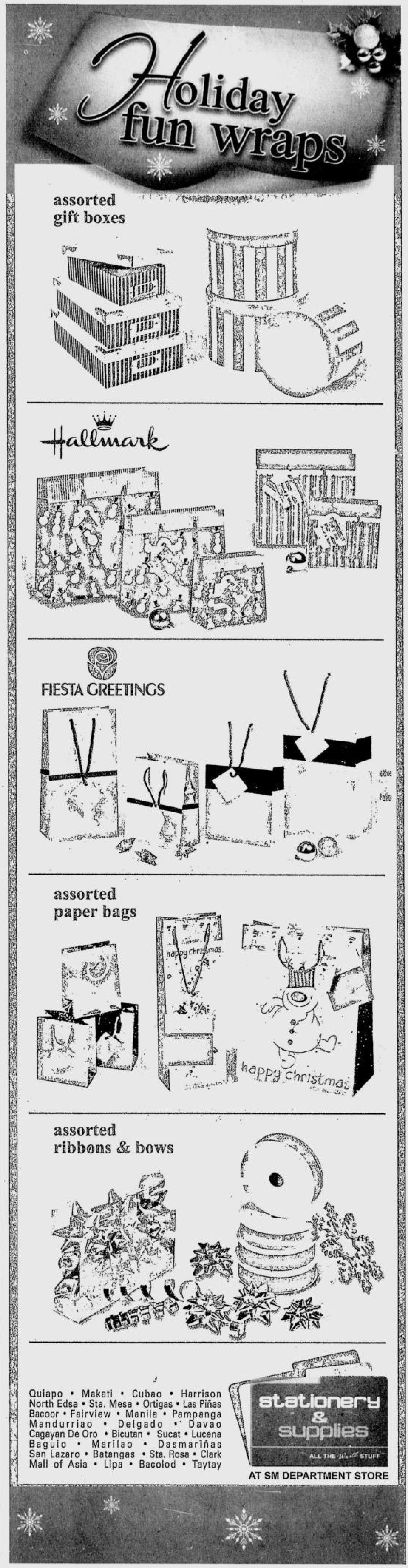
Emotional preparation is also important among breastfeeding mothers. At this stage, she needs the support of her family, especially her husband's. One of the reasons why women sometimes give up breastfeeding is their spouse's indifference to it or lack of support. At the early stages of breastfeeding, husbands should be supportive and helpful. Other family members can help by taking care of other household responsibilities.

Mothers who have decided to breastfeed should do so as soon as the baby is born. This is the key to ensure the success of breastfeeding. Latching the baby as soon as possible after the delivery helps the mother produce and express milk, because breastfeeding essentially follows the law of supply and demand.

Finally, getting enough information is the best way for would-be mothers to ready themselves for breastfeeding. They should read reference books, surf the Net or get tips from fellow moms who have successfully breastfed. This would guide them on the proper ways of breastfeeding and enlighten them on old myths about the practice.

Usually, women who say they can't breastfeed because they don't have enough breast milk, or because they have inverted nipples just weren't prepared for it or didn't have enough information about breastfeeding. They just need proper instruction on how to breastfeed properly.

To sum it up, a new mom can prepare for successful lactation by maintaining a healthy diet, keeping herself informed on the subject and making sure she is surrounded by supportive family and friends. All these will undoubtedly help strengthen her commitment and ensure a successful breastfeeding experience for her and her baby.



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Bacoor • Fairview • Manila • Pampanga
Mandurriao • Delgado • Davao
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AT SM DEPARTMENT STORE

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Super Christmas at the SM SUPERMALLS

The year's most awaited season is here. Celebrate it at SM Supermalls! Here, Christmas is larger, grander and simply better! Shop, dine and spend quality family time. No matter how you choose to celebrate, you're sure to get your fill of the Christmas spirit here.

Shop for the best gifts at the best bargains! Here, there's a wide selection to choose from so you're sure to find the perfect gift for your family and friends. From the trendiest clothes, to the most exciting toys, to the newest gadgets, you can find it all here.

What's Christmas without a feast? Treat your family to a mouthwatering meal at any of our restaurants. From quick and delicious meals, to specialty food items and international cuisines, to cakes and pastries for your sweet tooth, to the grandest full course feasts, there's always something to satisfy your cravings.

To complete the experience, cap it off with lots of family bonding time. See a movie, bowl a few games or play with the kids at one of the gaming centers. You can even just sit down and enjoy the various events, activities and shows scheduled at the SM Supermalls.

For your convenience, there's a special extended holiday schedule so you have more time to shop, dine and bond with your family. With all these things at the SM Supermalls, we're sure you'd agree, your Christmas celebration has never been this complete!

EVERYONE SHOPS AT SM SUPERMALLS DURING CHRISTMAS.

Yes, Even Him!

SM SUPERMALLS

Christmas Events at SM Supermalls

Mickey Mouse Clubhouse Christmas

Bring the kids along to meet and greet everyone's favorite, Mickey Mouse!

Dec. 18-23 • SM Megamall

The Great Christmas Chorale

Feel the Christmas spirit as various chorales serenade you with heartwarming carols.

SM Supercenter Valenzuela
Dec. 15: Sto. Domingo Parish Chorale
Dec. 16: St. Mary's Angel College of Valenzuela
Dec. 22: St. Benedict Academy Choir
Dec. 23: Valenzuela City Center for Performing Arts

SM Megamall
Dec. 15: Finale Chorale "Mega Voices and the 12 Days of Christmas Winners"
Dec. 25: Magnificat

SM City Sta. Mesa
Dec. 15: Ryan Cayabyab's Glee Girls Group, Led by Choir Master Emi Cayabyab
Dec. 21: One Accord Chorale
Dec. 22: UP Singing Ambassadors
Dec. 23: Mapua Concert Singers

SM City Bicutan
Dec. 16: UST Wind Chorale

SM Southmall
Dec. 16: Holly Angel Paraiso

SM City Sucat
Dec. 23: Roselle Nava & the Muzik Korner Chorale

SM Supercenter Pasig
Dec. 16: Ryan Cayabyab's Glee Girls Group, Led by Choir Master Emi Cayabyab
Dec. 22: One Accord

SM City Taytay
Dec. 23: TIP Chorale Society

SM City North Edsa
Dec. 15, 16 & 25: St. Pius X Chorale
Dec. 19: Central College of the Philippines and Village Choir
Dec. 22: Central College of the Philippines
Dec. 24: Tinig Pastol Choir

SM City Fairview
Dec. 15 & 24: Chamber Singers of Quezon City
Dec. 21: Hilig Awit Chorale
Dec. 22: Sto. Domingo Parish Choir
Dec. 25: Kenosis Music Ministry

Angelic Voices

Be serenaded by chorale groups as they spread the Christmas cheer!

All Metro Manila malls, weekdays of December • 2 PM and 4 PM

Santa's Corner

Visit your nearest Supermall to meet Santa and get your photo taken!

SM City North Edsa:
Dec. 15 & 22

SM Supercenter Valenzuela:
Dec. 16, 22 & 23

SM City Fairview:
Dec. 16, 20 & 23

SM Megamall:
Dec. 15, 22 & 24

SM City Sta. Mesa:
Dec. 15, 16, 22 to 24

SM City Manila:
Dec. 16, 23 & 24

SM City San Lazaro:
Dec. 15, 22 & 24

SM Southmall:
Dec. 21 & 28

SM City Bicutan:
Dec. 16 & 23 & 24

SM City Sucat:
Dec. 16 & 23

SM City Taytay:
Dec. 16, 22 to 25

SM Supercenter Muntinlupa:
Dec. 15, 21 and 22

Fireworks Display

Enjoy fireworks as they light up the sky.

SM City North Edsa
SM City Fairview
SM Megamall
Dec. 15, 16, 22, 23, 29 & 30
8:00pm

SM City Sta. Mesa:
Dec. 30
7:00pm

SM Southmall
SM City Bicutan
SM City Sucat
SM Supercenter Muntinlupa
Dec. 15, 16, 22, 26, 29 & 30
7:00pm

Holiday Mall Hours

(Metro Manila Malls only)

Dec. 1-30*
10am – 10pm
*Except SM Supercenter Pasig:
10am – 11pm

Dec. 15 & 22 (Sat)
10am – 12am

Dec. 24 & 31 (Mon)
9am – 7pm

Jan. 1, 2008
12nn – 9pm
*Except SM Supercenter Pasig:
Dec. 25 & Jan. 1, 2008
12nn – 11pm

PHILIPPINE DAILY ER

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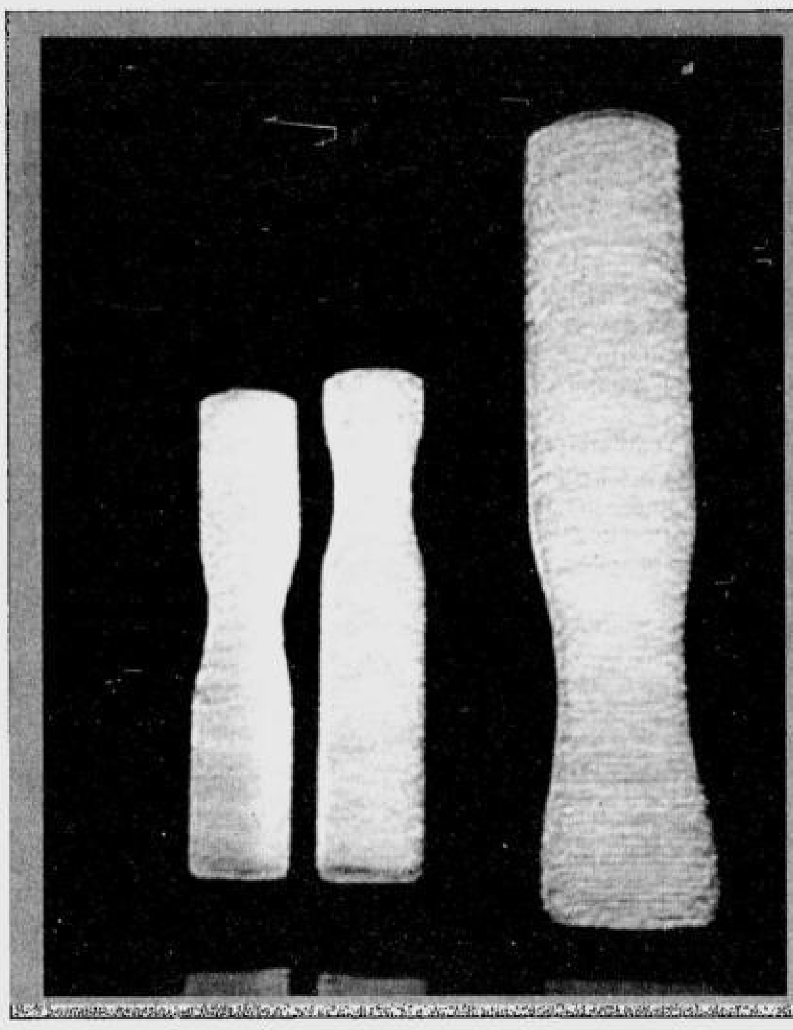


100 per cent design

STORY ON PAGE D2

Happiness Rings with HERSHEY'S
Kissables
SAMSUNG
WIN Exclusive HERSHEY'S phones. Just text HERSHEY'S to 2600 for more details.
Happy Holidays!

AIG PhilAm Bank Launches New, Exciting Promo

After the success of its Raise & Erase Raffle Promo, AIG PhilAm Bank has launched yet another program to continue rewarding new and loyal customers and sustain customer satisfaction. With a persistent desire to provide AIG PhilAm Credit Card and Dolce Vita MasterCard cardholders greater value for their hard-earned money, the Bank has introduced its holiday offerings.

"*Last year, we held the P1 Million Shopping Spree at Rustan's promo which allowed our winner to enjoy a shopping experience at the country's premier department store, among other exclusive privileges. On the other hand, the recently-held Raise & Erase raffle, which offered our credit cardholders the chance to win P1 Million in cash credits gave our winner the opportunity to erase her outstanding balance or offset future purchases billed to her credit card account,*" **AIG PhilAm's Cards Marketing VP Sandro Villaraza** explained.

On top of AIG PhilAm's list of holiday perks for its credit cardholders is a raffle promo, dubbed as AIG Credit Cards' **Holiday Travel Escapade**. The program offers an all-expense paid round trip air tickets for four to Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia. Apart from airfare tickets and hotel accommodations, pocket money will also be awarded to winners of the raffle promo. On top of these, winners of the Singapore, Hong Kong and Australia trips will win tickets to Sentosa Island, HK Disneyland and Australian Wonderland, respectively.

"*We wanted to keep the excitement going, and so this time, we are giving our cardholders the chance to travel for free, with hotel accommodations and travel allowance,*" Villaraza said.

Aside from the raffle promo, AIG Credit Cards has also launched exclusive offerings and special discounts with partner merchants that cardholders can avail. AIG Credit Card cardholders can buy, not only appliances and furniture, computers, toys and gadgets, but designer brands as well (at Rustan's Department Store and Stores Specialist, Inc. outlets) on installment at 0% interest.

"*We all know that the Holidays is a time for families and friends to get together, celebrate, and exchange gifts, and we want to make sure that our customers are empowered to do all that by offering them discounts and exclusive privileges through the use of their AIG Credit Card. We also included in the program dining establishments where our customers are entitled to big discounts and special treats. We even partnered with Enchanted Kingdom, the biggest theme park in the country so that our cardholders may enjoy P220-discount on Good-Any-Day Passes and spend quality time with their loved ones,*" he added.

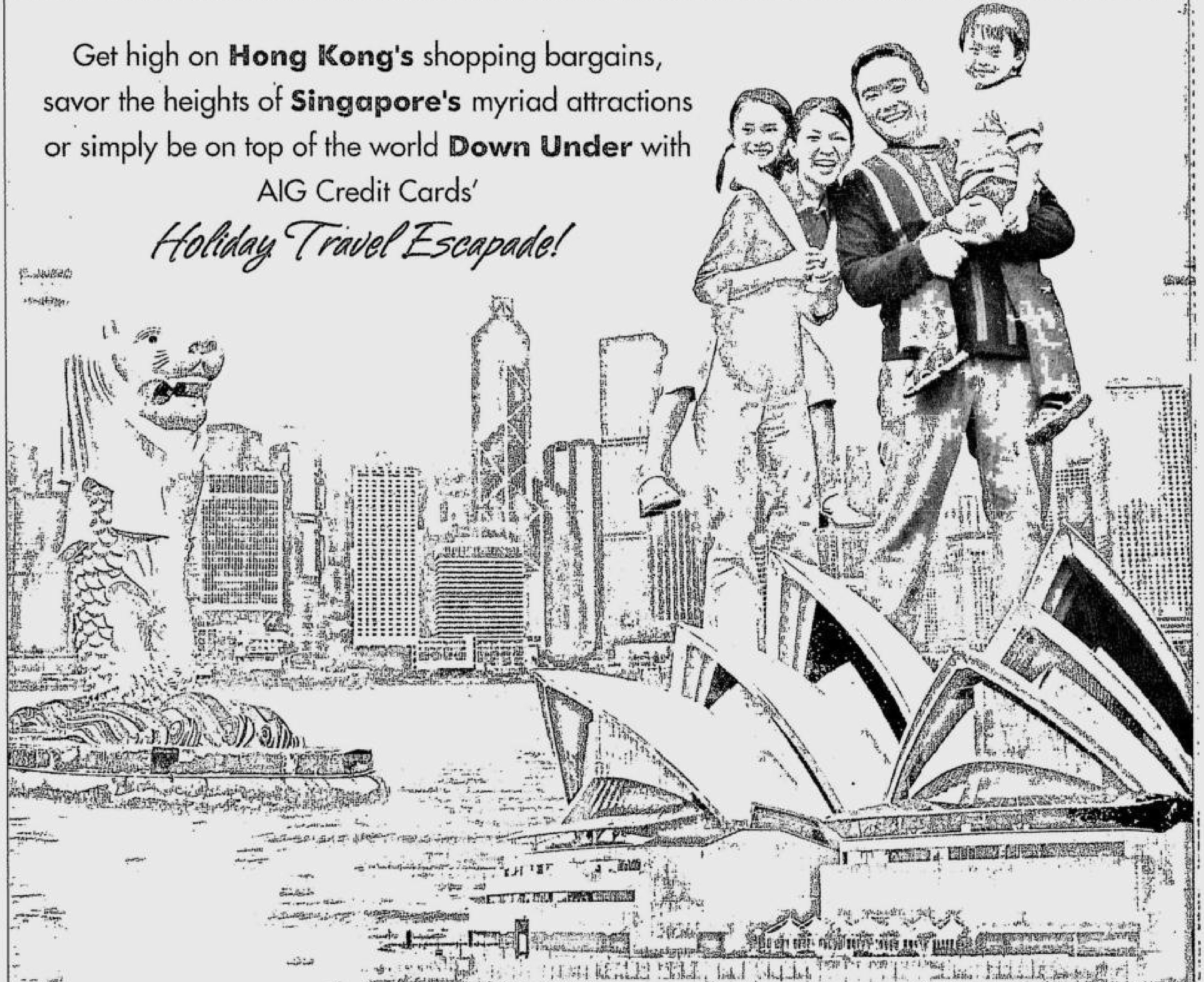
"*With all these offerings, our cardholders will be able to maximize their Christmas shopping budget, and at the same time try their luck in the Holiday Travel Escapade raffle promo,*" Villaraza said. "*Certainly, it's our way of thanking our valued cardholders for their continuing loyalty and support.*"

AIG PhilAm Savings Bank is a subsidiary of American International Group, Inc. (AIG), world leaders in insurance and financial services. AIG is the leading international insurance organization with operations in more than 130 countries and jurisdictions. AIG companies serve commercial, institutional and individual customers through the most extensive worldwide property-casualty and life insurance networks of any insurer. In addition, AIG companies are leading providers of retirement services, financial services and asset management around the world. AIG's common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, as well as the stock exchanges in Paris, Switzerland and Tokyo.

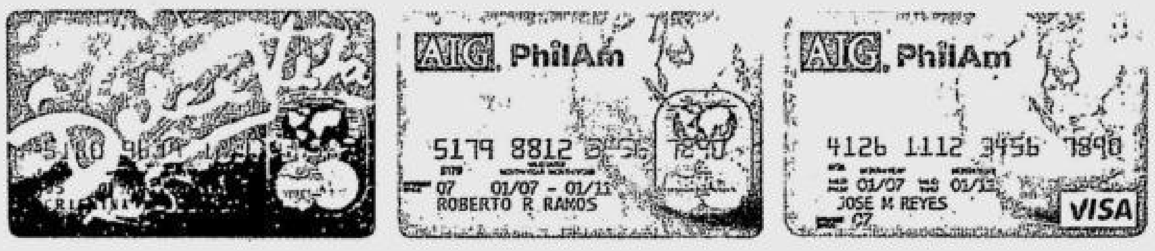
For more information on AIG Credit Cards and the Holiday Travel Escapade promo and other promotions, please see flyers or call 683-8888 or 1-800-1888-8600 (Domestic Toll-Free). Interested parties may also visit the nearest AIG PhilAm Savings Bank branch.

How far can your AIG Credit Card take you?

Get high on **Hong Kong's** shopping bargains, savor the heights of **Singapore's** myriad attractions or simply be on top of the world **Down Under** with AIG Credit Cards' *Holiday Travel Escapade!*



Use your AIG Credit Card for all your holiday shopping needs and get a chance to win an exciting travel package. Every Php1,000 charged to your card earns you 1 raffle entry. The more you use your card, the more chances of winning!



Promo Period: November 1, 2007 to January 15, 2008

Travel prizes include roundtrip airfare, 4 days/3 nights hotel accommodations, pocket money and specified city tours for 4 persons.

See flyers or call 683-8888 for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5494, Series of 2007.

The Philam Group of Companies offers you a full range of financial services:
Life and General Insurance • Property and Casualty Insurance • Health Care Management • Pre-Need Plans • Savings, Mortgage and Credit Cards • Mutual Funds • Property Development • Business Process Outsourcing • Bancassurance

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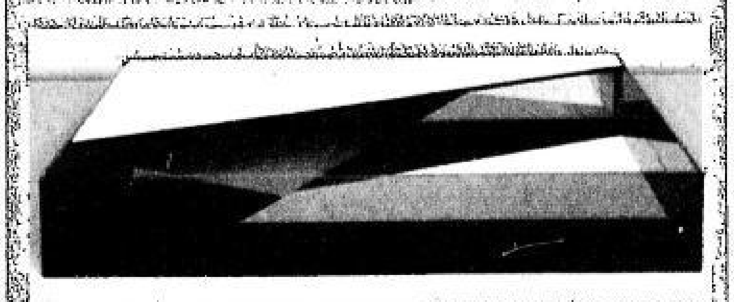
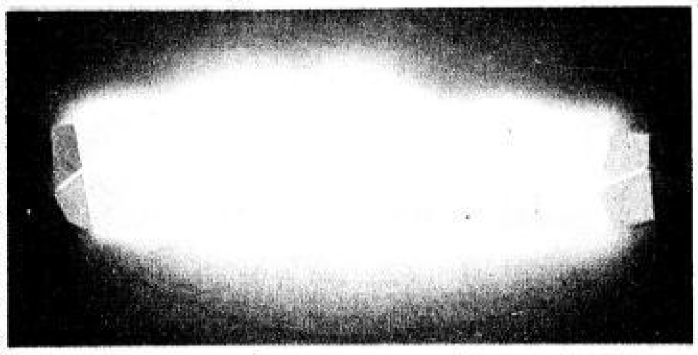
AIG PhilAm Savings Bank





Beam beam, bang bang

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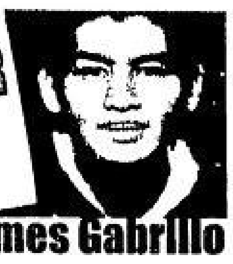
100 per cent design

Standardization of shapes, reuse of industrial objects, post-minimalist styles, multi-sensory, and versatility—this is 2007's best international designs (that you probably never heard of)



THUNDER ROAD

James Gabrillo

IT'S ALWAYS INTERESTING TO disengage from a merely geographic understanding of contemporary art. From Tokyo to Sweden, design is evolving in a big way.

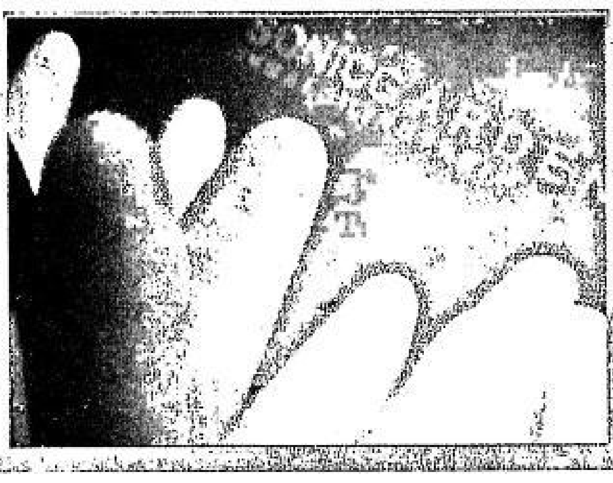
After having set aside the dry-flat scene that had in the recent past characterized Ikea-like products and Droog-mood experimentations, designers are boisterously staking their all.

This list is an effort to explore other, possibly more mysterious, stirring areas—imagined geographies, personal worlds, and private languages invented by today's generation of artists.

This does not mean that this roundup is completely disassociated from the present.

It means that many artists, or at least many of the artists who struck us with their work, are looking for more complex systems and mechanisms to describe reality.

Look closer. These spaces might be worth exploring.



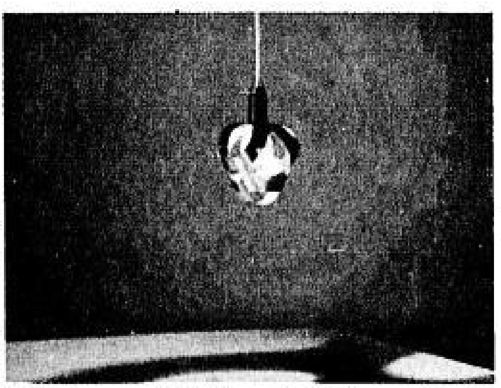
Groove is in the art

[illegible]

Expired sensation

Texan-raised and London-based designer Heather Harrison brings us Expiration Date, an exciting line of contemporary pieces with strong references to the past, taking a revival trip through the last 50 years of fashion history.

"We put a label on the clothes with an expiration date so that from the day after they are created we can know how long they should be kept. When they expire, their charm will be immediately remade in an eternal vision. It is a vintage experiment in reverse, which maintains the magic of an era, because in fashion nothing is invented, everything is recreated."



Design newspeak

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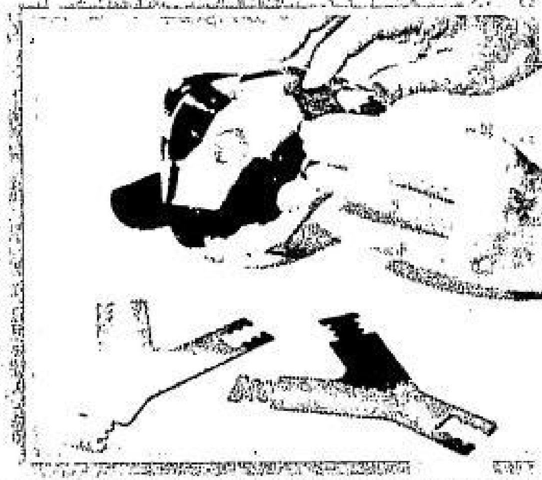
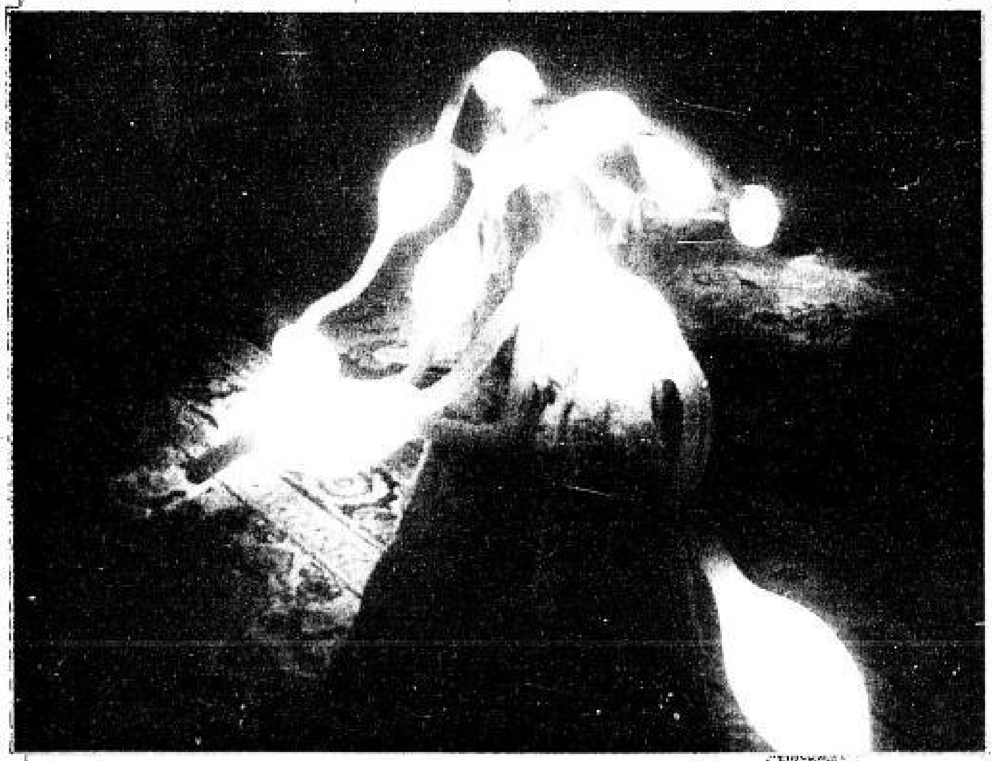




Rollercage

[illegible]

About the window

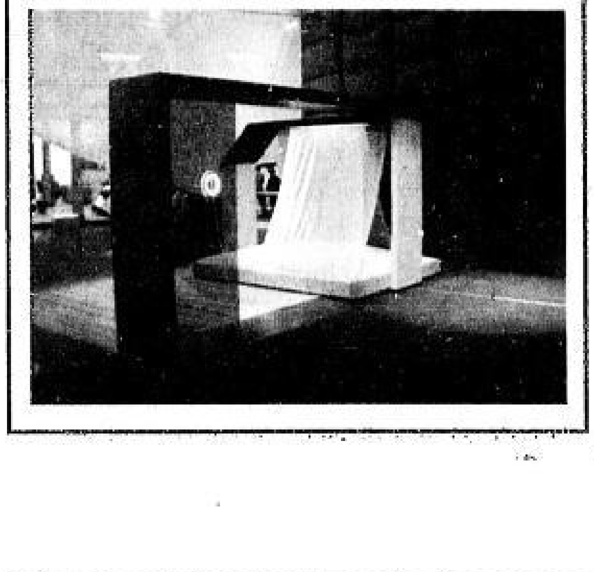
Jean-Michel Policar's project "Window-Aire" reconsiders the window as an architecture that provides the opportunity to better explore the relationship between the interior and the exterior.

The project centers on a glass window that creates an outdoor feel, and on a photovoltaic light source capable of creating a space that's controlled by natural light.

It's a project that entailed a great deal of research; the project having a strong conceptual element, a reflection on the infinite possibilities to explore the formal and imaginative space that exists between the interior and the exterior.

A nonplace of passage, the window is also the observation and reinterpretation point of living spaces.

"This is a concept, a further step forward," Policar says. "It is an idea and proposal that is not really a collectible or an object to be purchased; it is an altruistic deed, an act of initiation."



Front art: let's dance

[illegible]

100 per cent design

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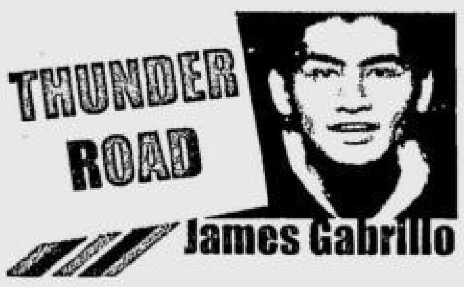

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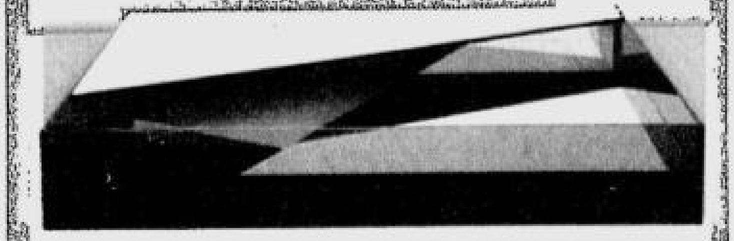
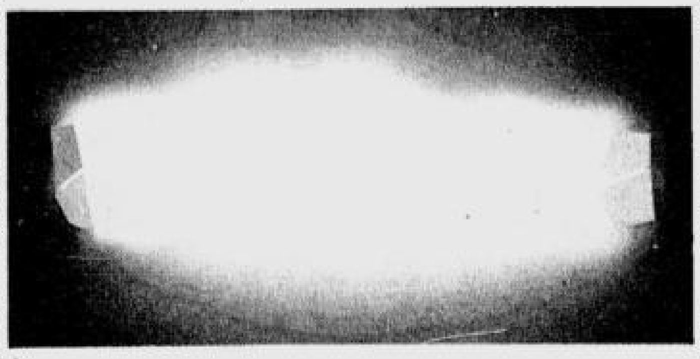
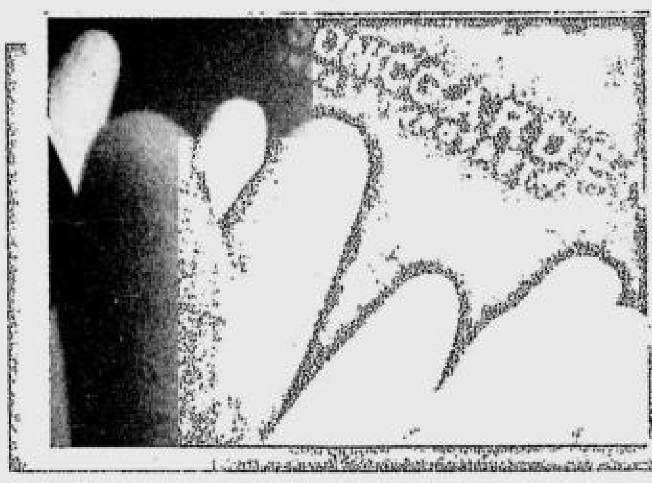
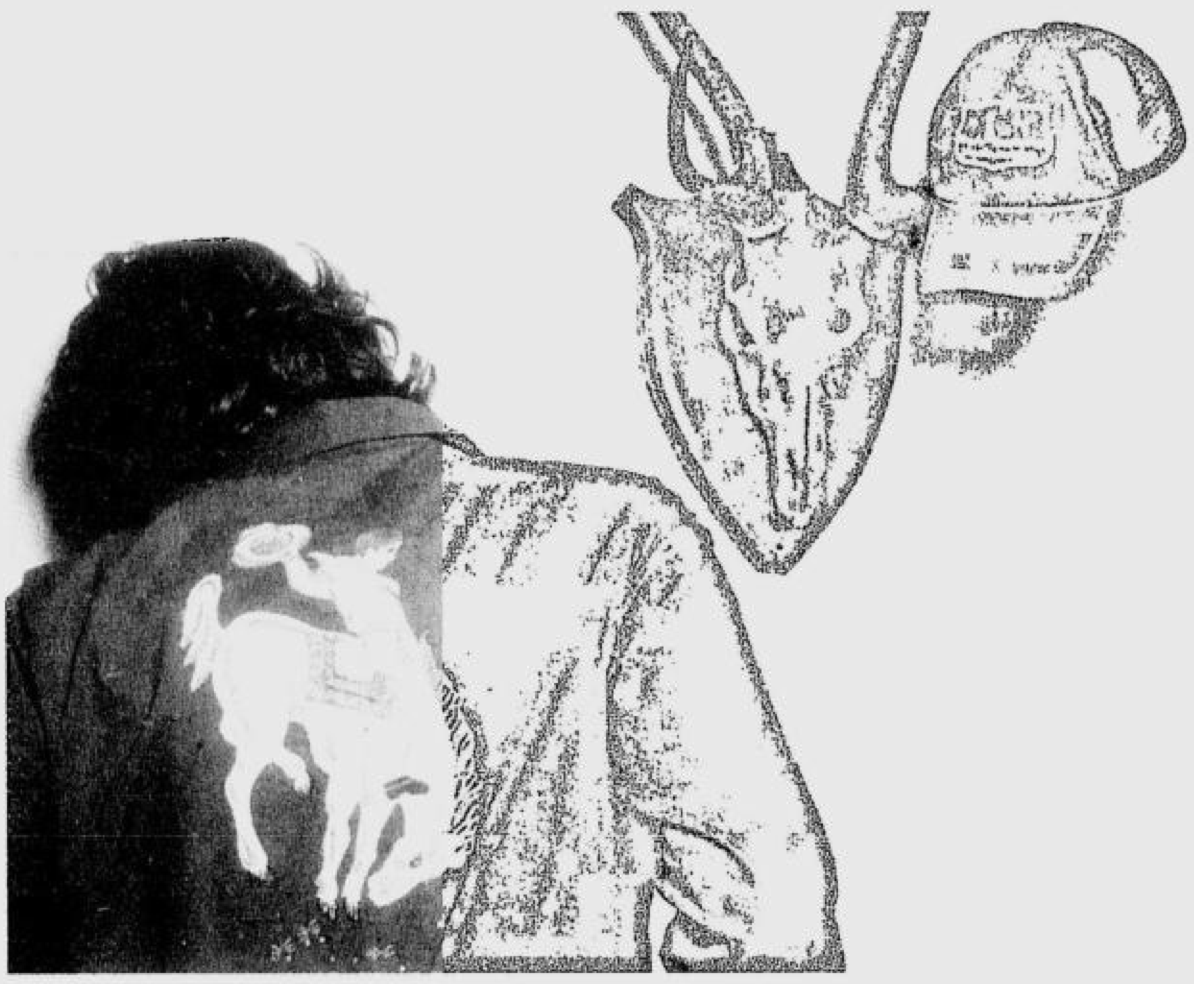
Look closer. These spaces might be worth exploring.







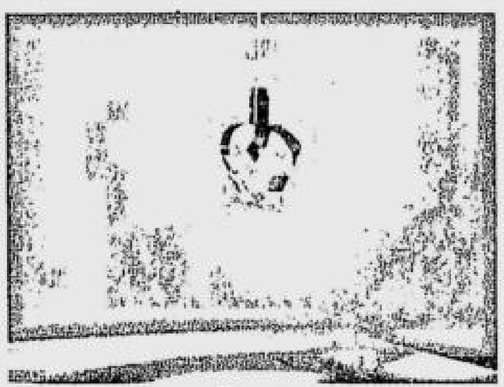
Groove is in the art

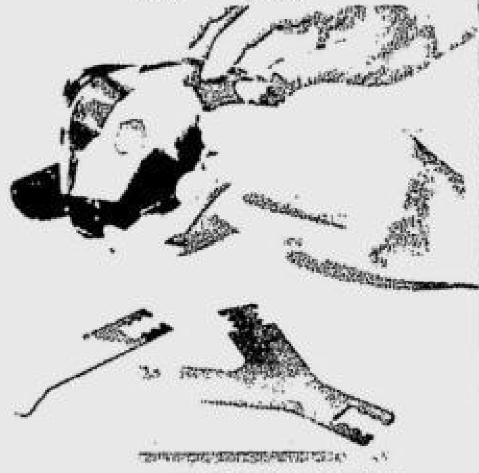


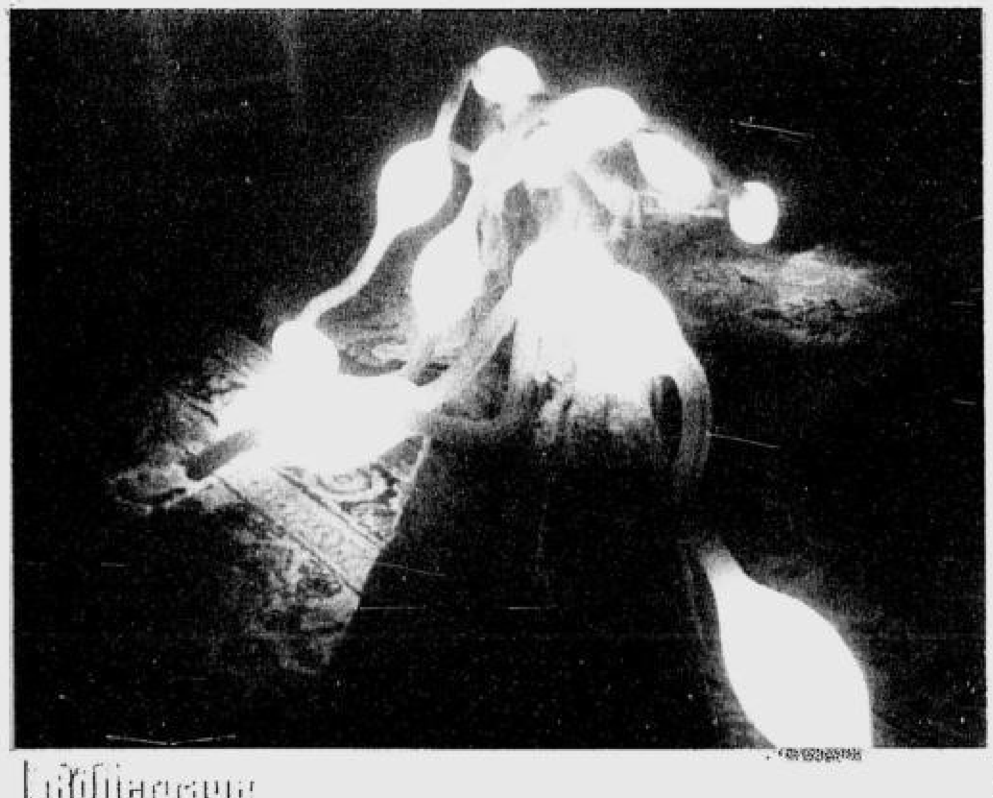
Expired sensation

Texan-raised and London-based designer Heather Harrison brings us Expiration Date, an exciting line of contemporary pieces with strong references to the past, taking a revival trip through the last 50 years of fashion history.

"We put a label on the clothes with an expiration date so that from the day after they are created we can know how long they should be kept. When they expire, their charm will be immediately remade in an eternal vision. It is a vintage experiment in reverse, which maintains the magic of an era, because in fashion nothing is invented, everything is recreated."







About the window

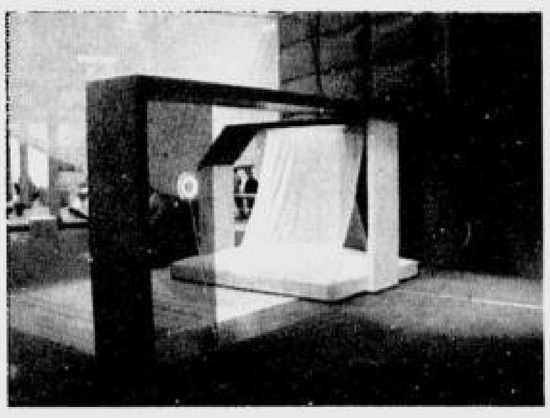
Jean-Michel Policar's project "Window-Aire" reconsiders the window as an architecture that provides the opportunity to better explore the relationship between the interior and the exterior.

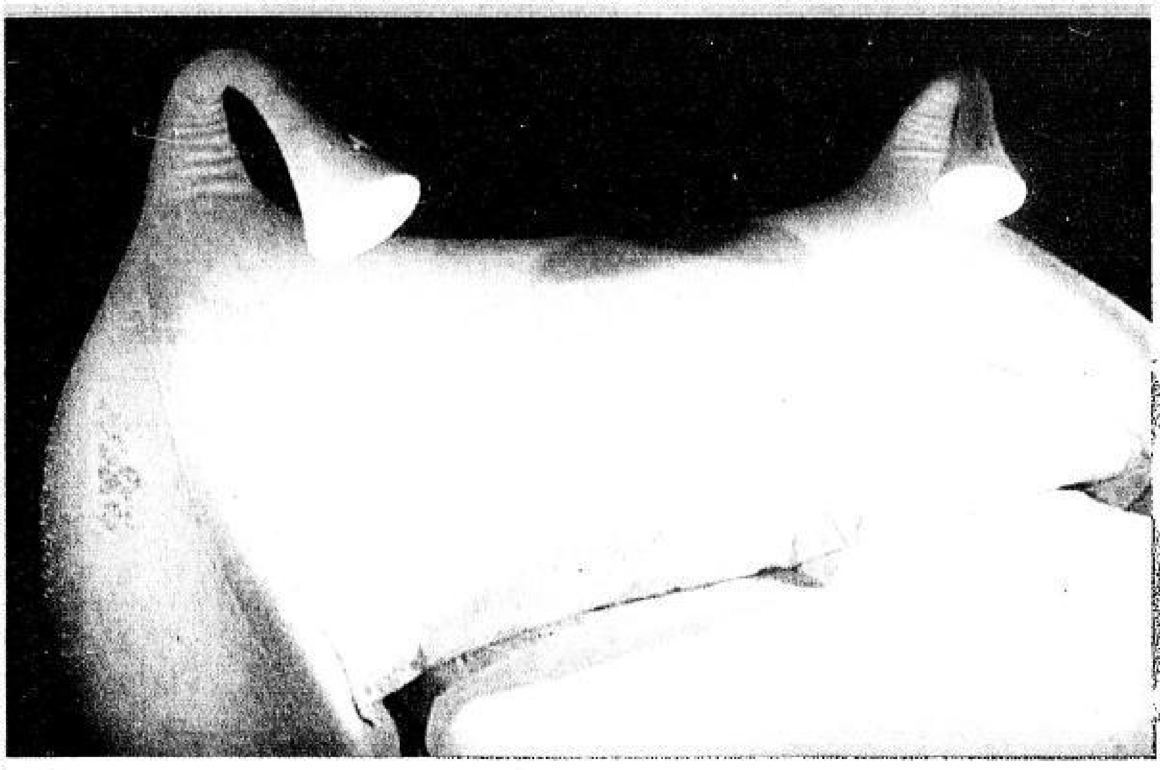
The project centers on a glass window that creates an outdoor feel, and on a photovoltaic light source capable of creating a space that's controlled by natural light.

It's a project that entailed a great deal of research; the project having a strong conceptual element, a reflection on the infinite possibilities to explore the formal and imaginative space that exists between the interior and the exterior.

A nonplace of passage, the window is also the observation and reinterpretation point of living spaces.

"This is a concept, a further step forward," Policar says. "It is an idea and proposal that is not really a collectible or an object to be purchased; it is an altruistic deed, an act of initiation."





Science of Sleep

[illegible] took god the silent approach [illegible] the iSleep [illegible] team. Mod[illegible] former Rota designed by Stefano Giovannoni and Rodrigo [illegible] for Domodinamica [illegible] by Modular.

Mod[illegible] flexible [illegible] [illegible] together [illegible] comfortable sleep.

The double [illegible] [illegible] by the flexibility of the polyurethane [illegible] which has been covered in white fabric [illegible] folded [illegible] mattress.

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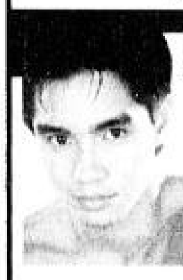

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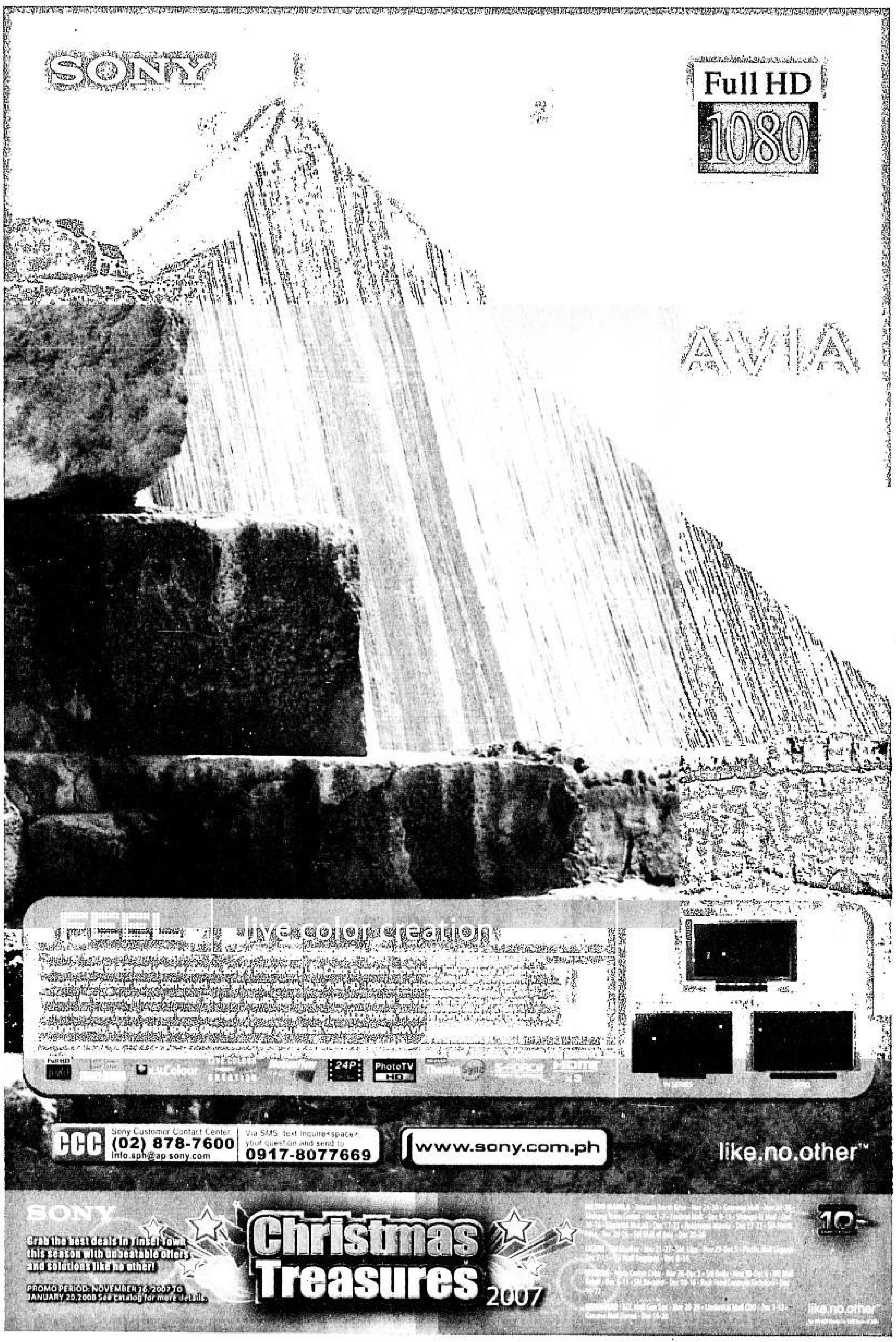

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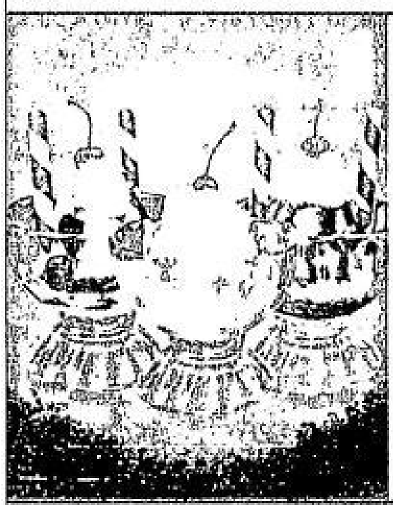

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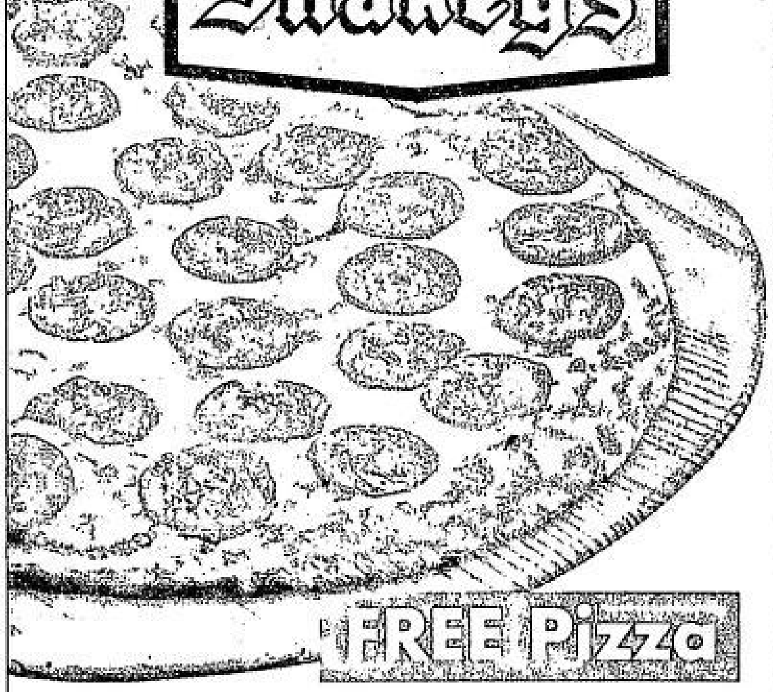

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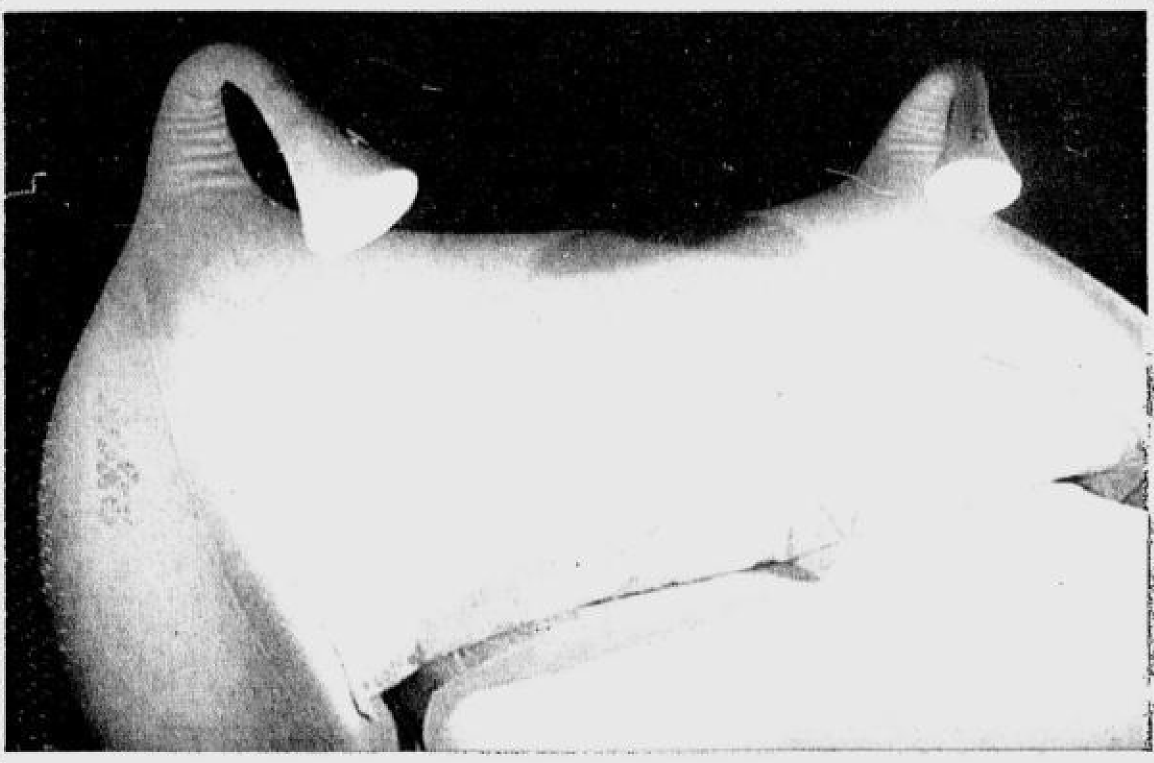

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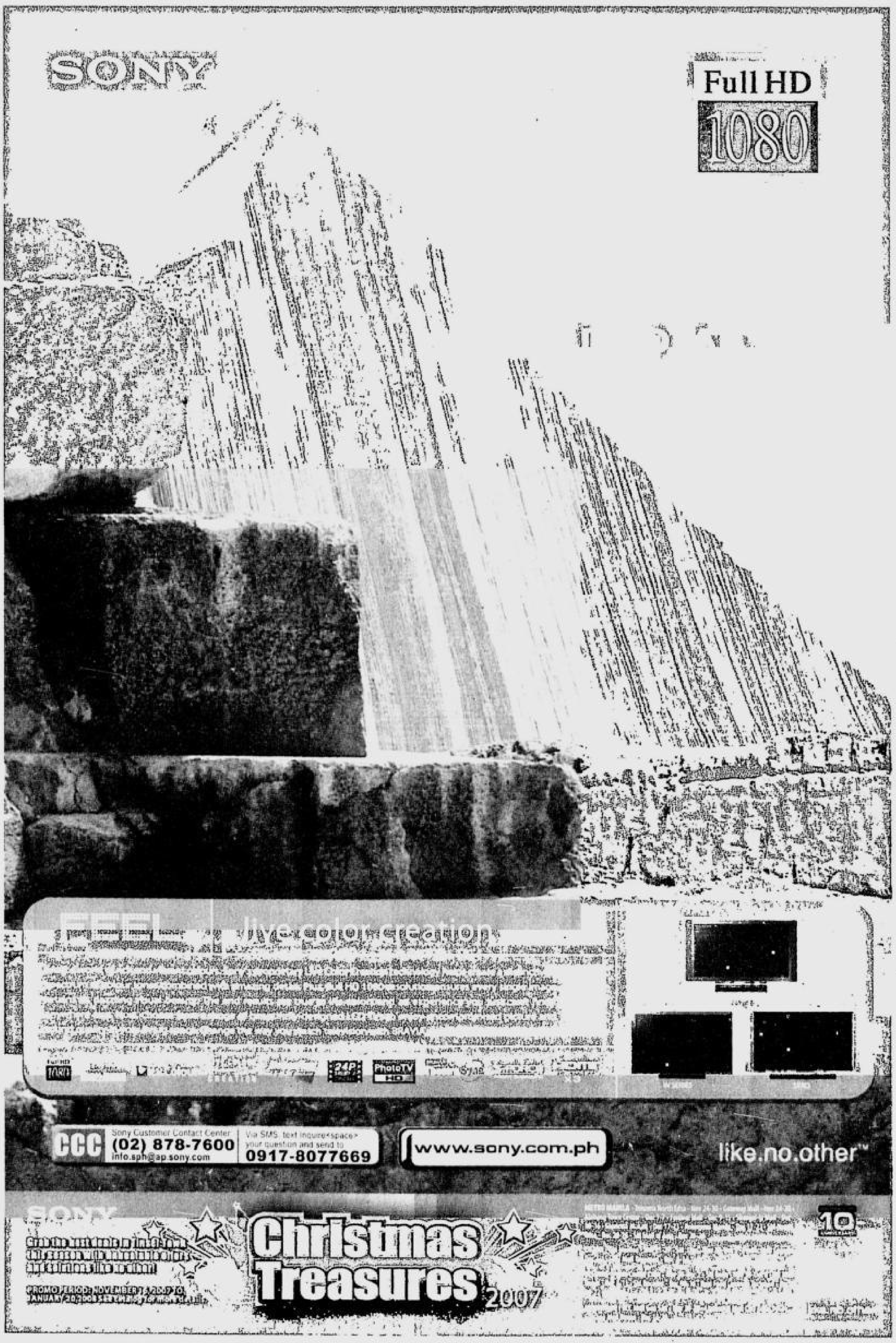

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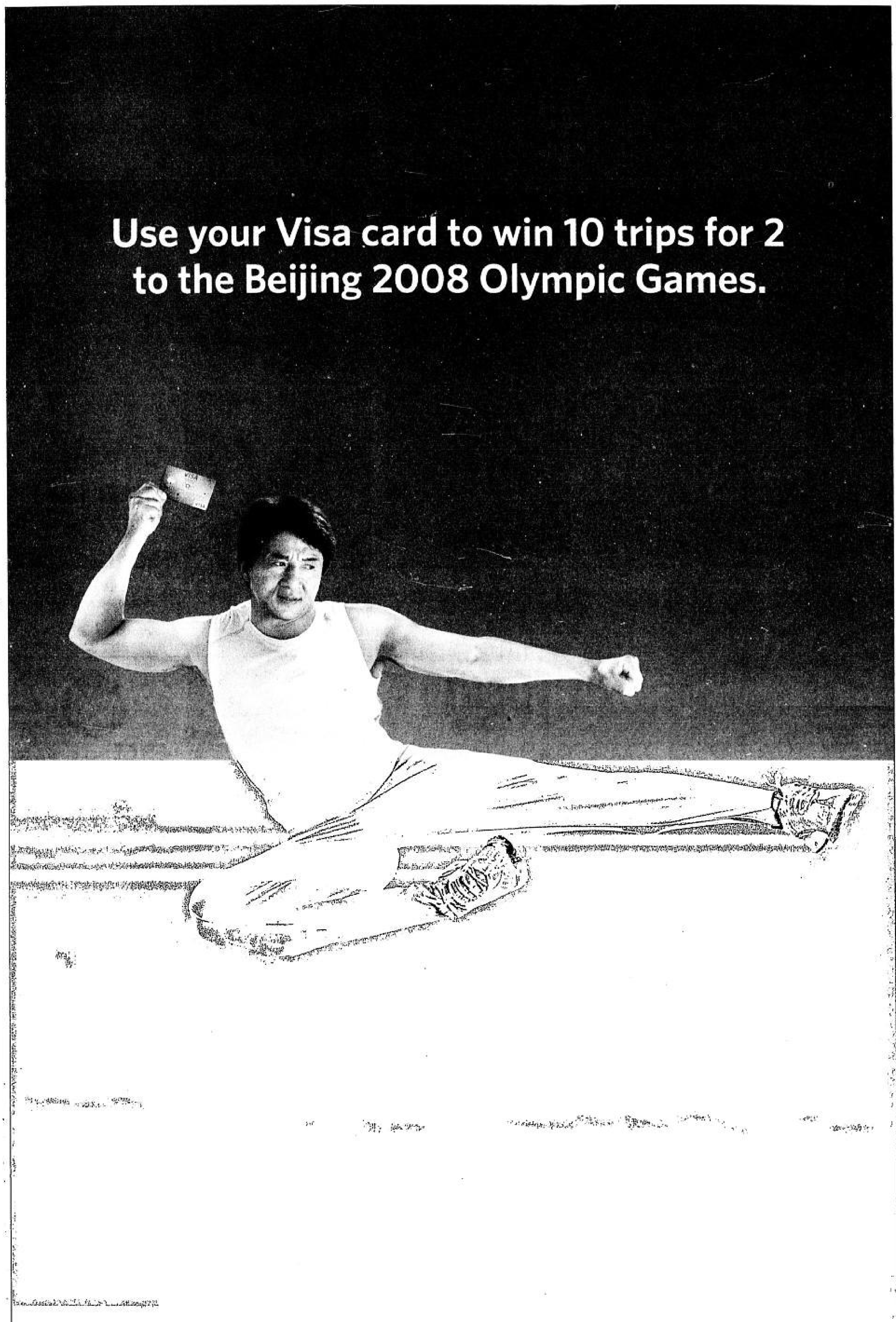
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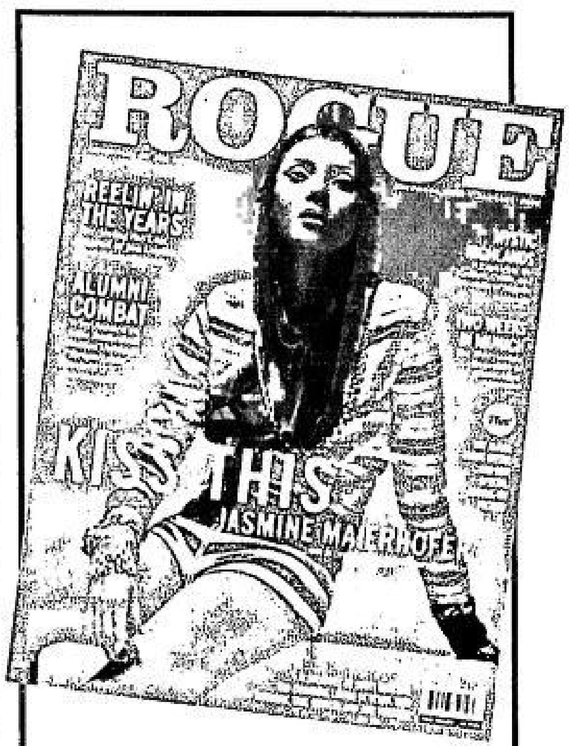

Kiss this

GRAB A COPY OF ROGUE magazine's December '07-January '08 issue and get the skinny on classic rockers, college clockers, and runaway lookers in their special year-end issue. Everything for the guy who wants everything—all this and more in Rogue.

Read a profile of model Jasmine Maierhofer by Erwin Romulo (lovingly photographed by Mark Nicdao); find out what happened to a great Pinoy rocker in "Retrieving the Lost Legend of Jun Lopito" by Sarge Lacuesta and Mookie Katigbak; and learn why Ateneo vs. La Salle basketball games are unhinging "respectable" society in a piece by New York Times contributor Rafe Bartholomew.

Travel to Sagada this month, where photographer Gutsy Tuason takes you through the coffins, caves, and waterfalls of this mysterious destination; and head to Munich where Andy Maluche drags you through the beer-soaked depravity that is Oktoberfest.

In this month's Rogue's Gallery, Alessandra Tinio affirms her attraction to the sexually ambiguous; Chino Reyes rolls with the trigger-happy cops of "Hot Fuzz;" Alexis Tioseco gives us a short cut of Roxlee's short film; Ramon de Veyra unravels the twisted, comic plot of "I Killed Adolf Hitler;" James Gabrillo spends an eye-opening "30 Days" with Morgan Spurlock; Erwin Romulo sits down with the sinister minds of "Most Evil" and jams with Reklamo; Martin Mari unloads some click-worthy Web Droppings for the month; Ito and Ana Laygo succumb to the Italian charms of Cantinetta; Juana Manahan deconstructs the dreams of artist Rom Villaseran; Anjanette Pe spars with the men of URCC; and Paolo Reyes peels away the forgotten layers of Iloilo's past and pilots a flight with SEAIR founder Nikos Gitsis.

Also, check out new work by Scott Garceau, Tad Ermitaño, Lourd de Veyra, Earl Ignacio, and Jake Verzosa; and enjoy a unique story collaboration between award-winning fictionist Luis Katigbak and artist Yvonne Quisimbing-Romulo in a special interactive piece exclusive to this issue.

Pick up a copy of Rogue at your nearest newsstand or call 852-0000 to order a copy delivered straight to your doorstep or for annual subscriptions.

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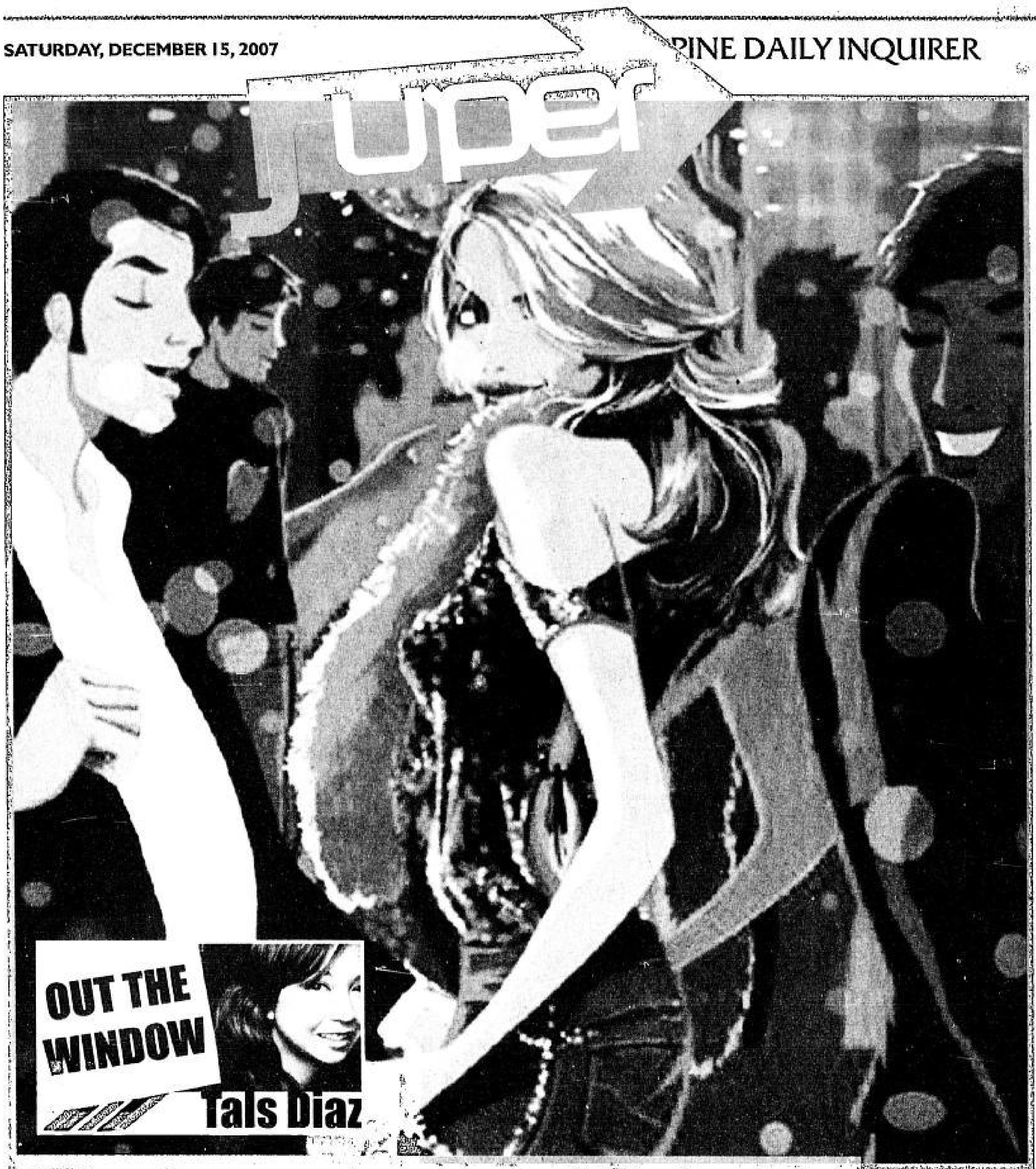

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The Importance of Being Very Important

THE IMPORTANCE/ E2

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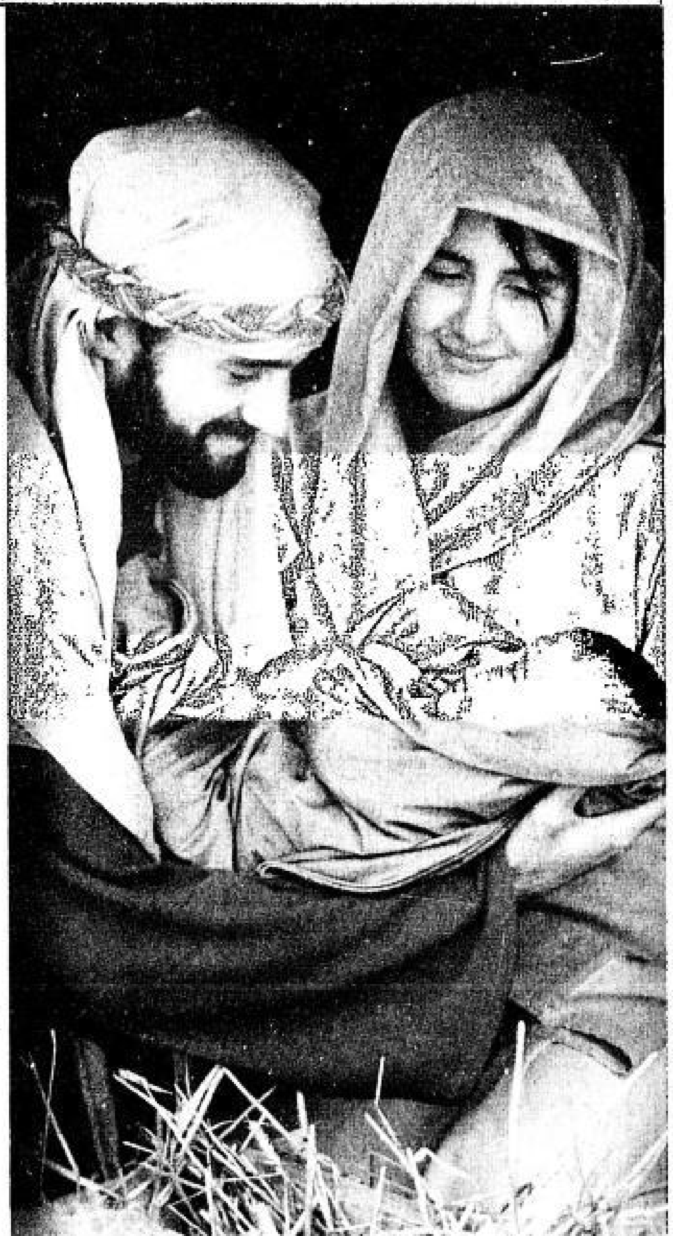

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PASKOWP3

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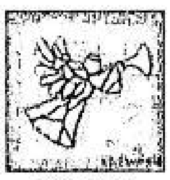
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Jingle Bells	XMASPT6
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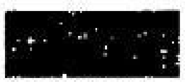
Text Cards

Merry Christmas
PASKOPIC2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Globe

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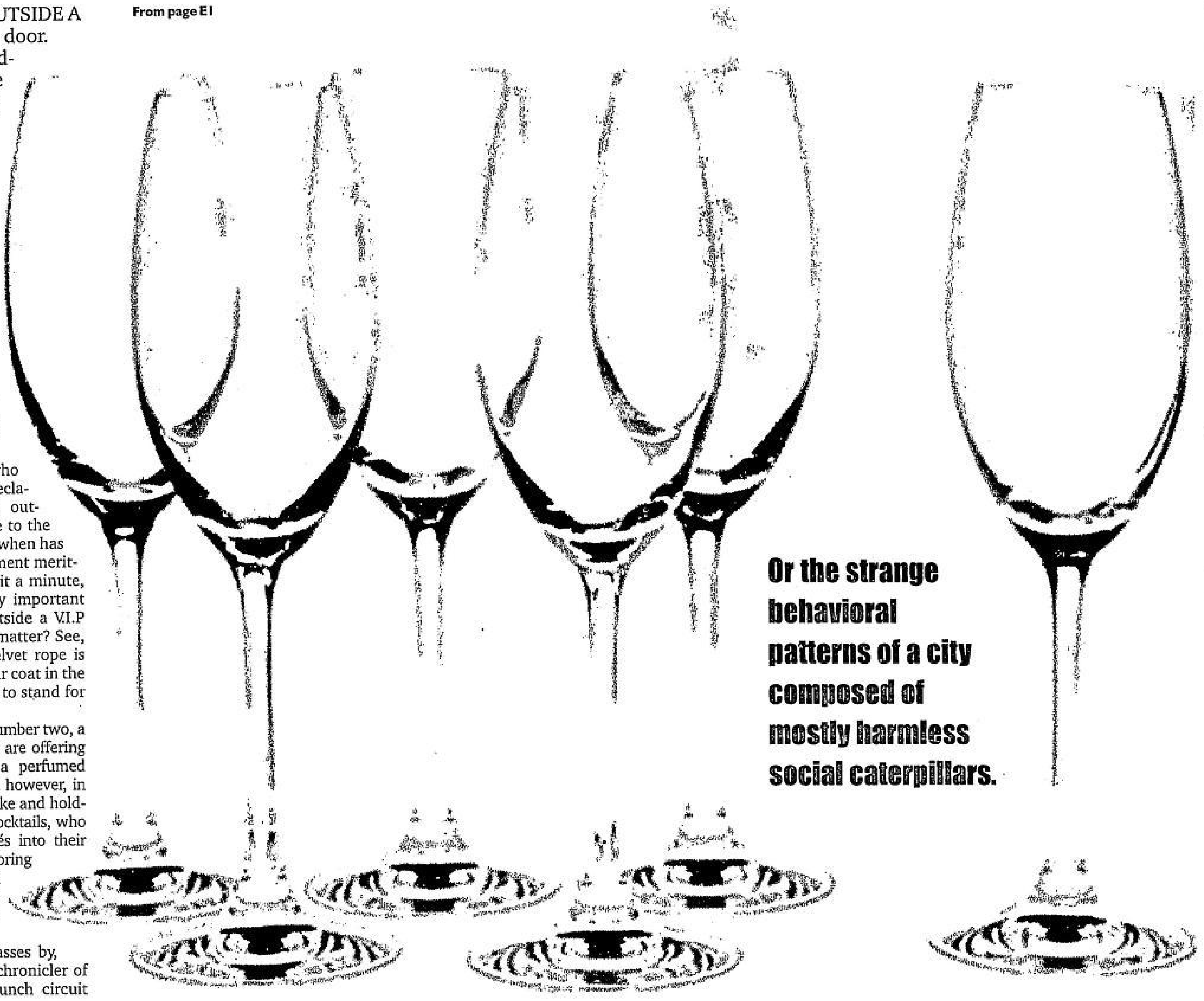
The Importance of Being Very Important

From page E1



Or the strange behavioral patterns of a city composed of mostly harmless social caterpillars.

A LINE SNAKES OUTSIDE A non-descript door. There is a standoff at the front of the line. A guy is flailing his arms passionately, arguing with a burly, blasé man in black standing his ground. Overheard:

"But I'm on the list! *Hindi n'yo ba ako kilala?"*

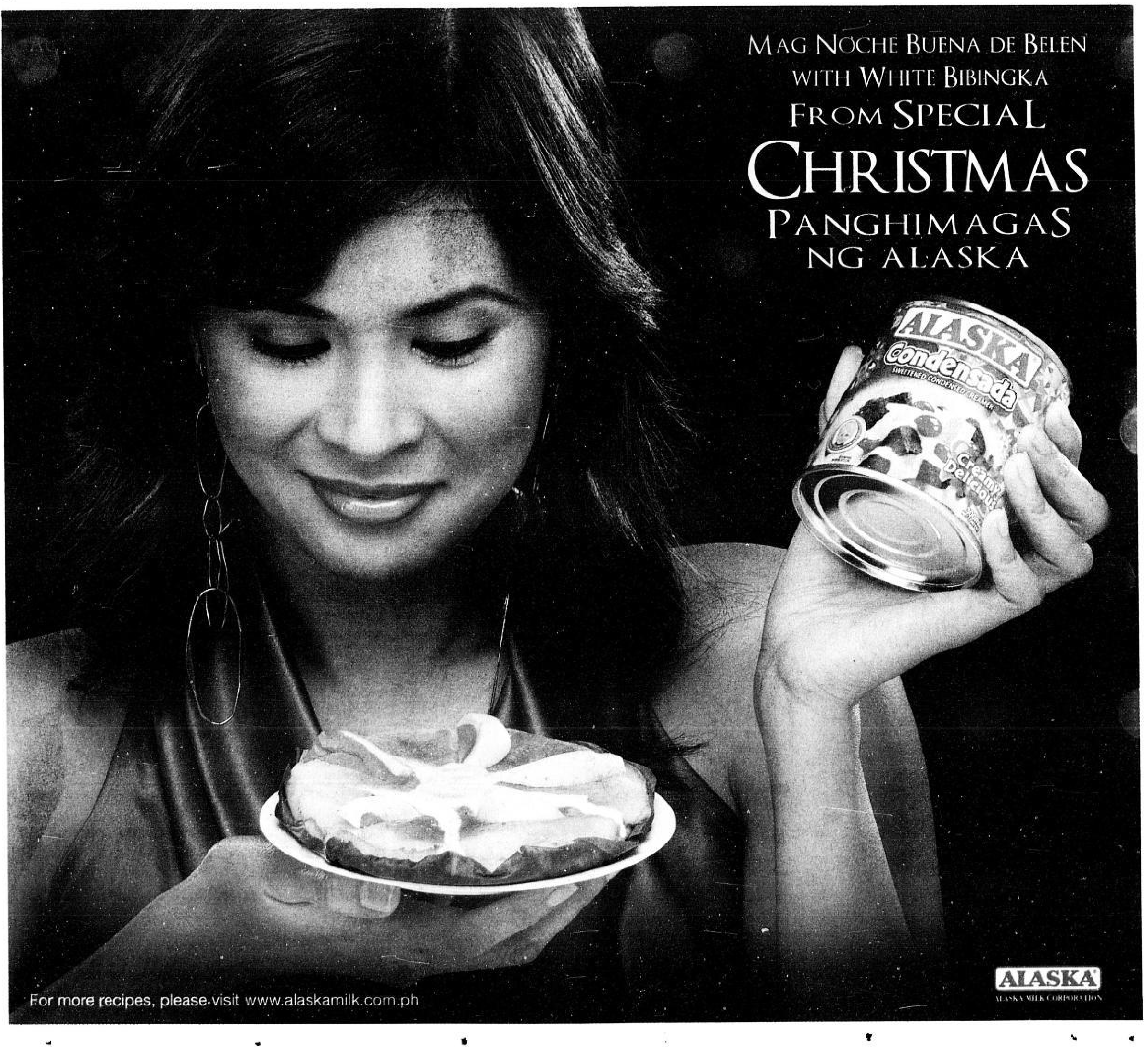
The burly guard remains unmoved, and the guy slinks away sheepishly. The next one in line, a girl this time, makes the attempt with: "*Kaibigan ako ni* (so-and-so)!" punctuated with a look as dagger-sharp as her patent stilettos.

Pity the poor bouncer who has to contend with such declarations of self-importance outside this door, the entrance to the hallowed V.I.P. room. Since when has nagging and verbal harassment merited one V.I.P. status? Oh wait a minute, since when did supposedly important people have to line up outside a V.I.P room to get inside for that matter? See, in a country where the velvet rope is about as appropriate as a fur coat in the Serengeti, "V.I.P" has come to stand for "Very Important *Pila*."

Cut to: nocturnal scene number two, a cocktail hour where waiters are offering dainty hors d'oeuvres to a perfumed crowd. The waiter is stalled however, in the midst of girls dressed alike and holding similarly colored pink cocktails, who are shoveling those canapés into their mouths as if they were storing food for the winter. Which brings me to V.I.P. meaning number two: Very Important *Pataygutom*.

A photographer then passes by, he is a well-known visual chronicler of the party and product launch circuit

THE IMPORTANCE/ E3



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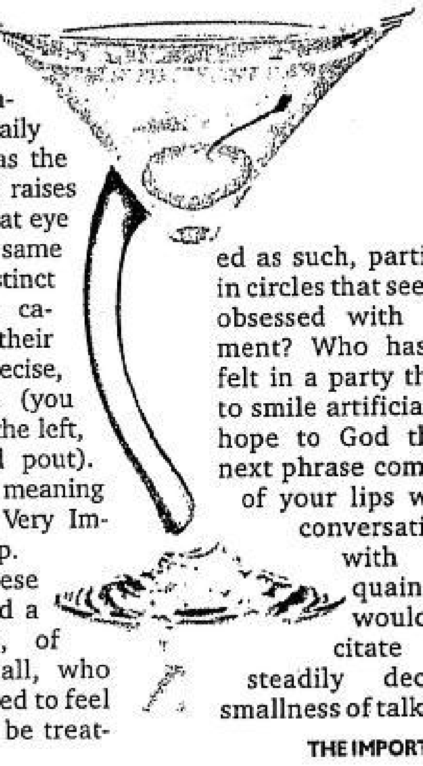
The Importance of Being Very Important

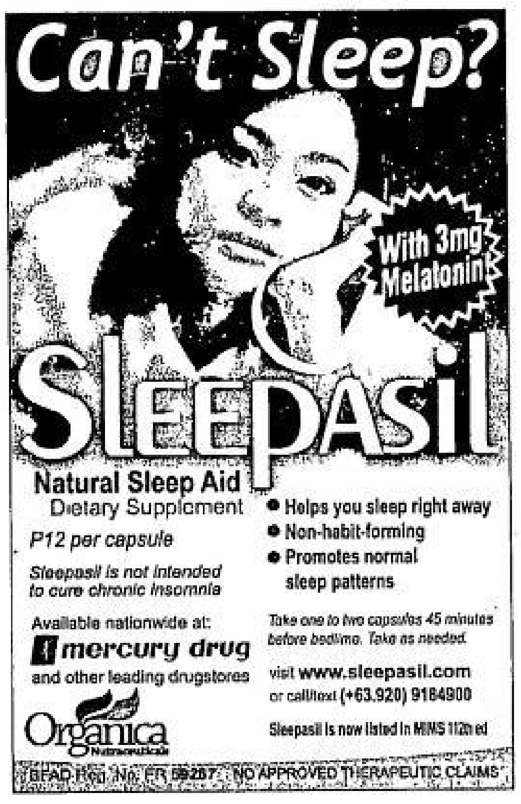
From page E2



that seems to happens nowadays on a near-daily basis. As soon as the social paparazzi raises his camera lens at eye level, those same girls, upon instinct and in perfect cadence, tilt their heads to the precise, practiced angle (you know—turn to the left, chin down and pout). Herein lies V.I.P meaning number three: Very Important Photo-op.

I take all these with a grin and a grain of salt, of course. After all, who has never wanted to feel important and be treated as such, particularly in circles that seem to be obsessed with entitlement? Who has never felt in a party the need to smile artificially, and hope to God that the next phrase coming out of your lips while in conversation with an acquaintance would resuscitate the steadily decreasing smallness of talk?

THE IMPORTANCE/ E3



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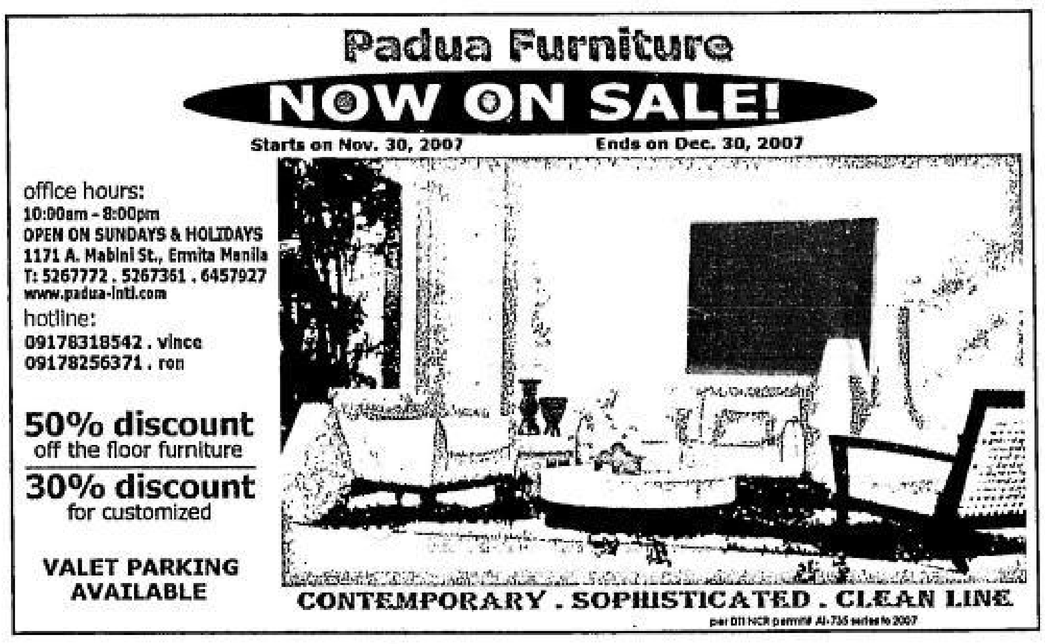

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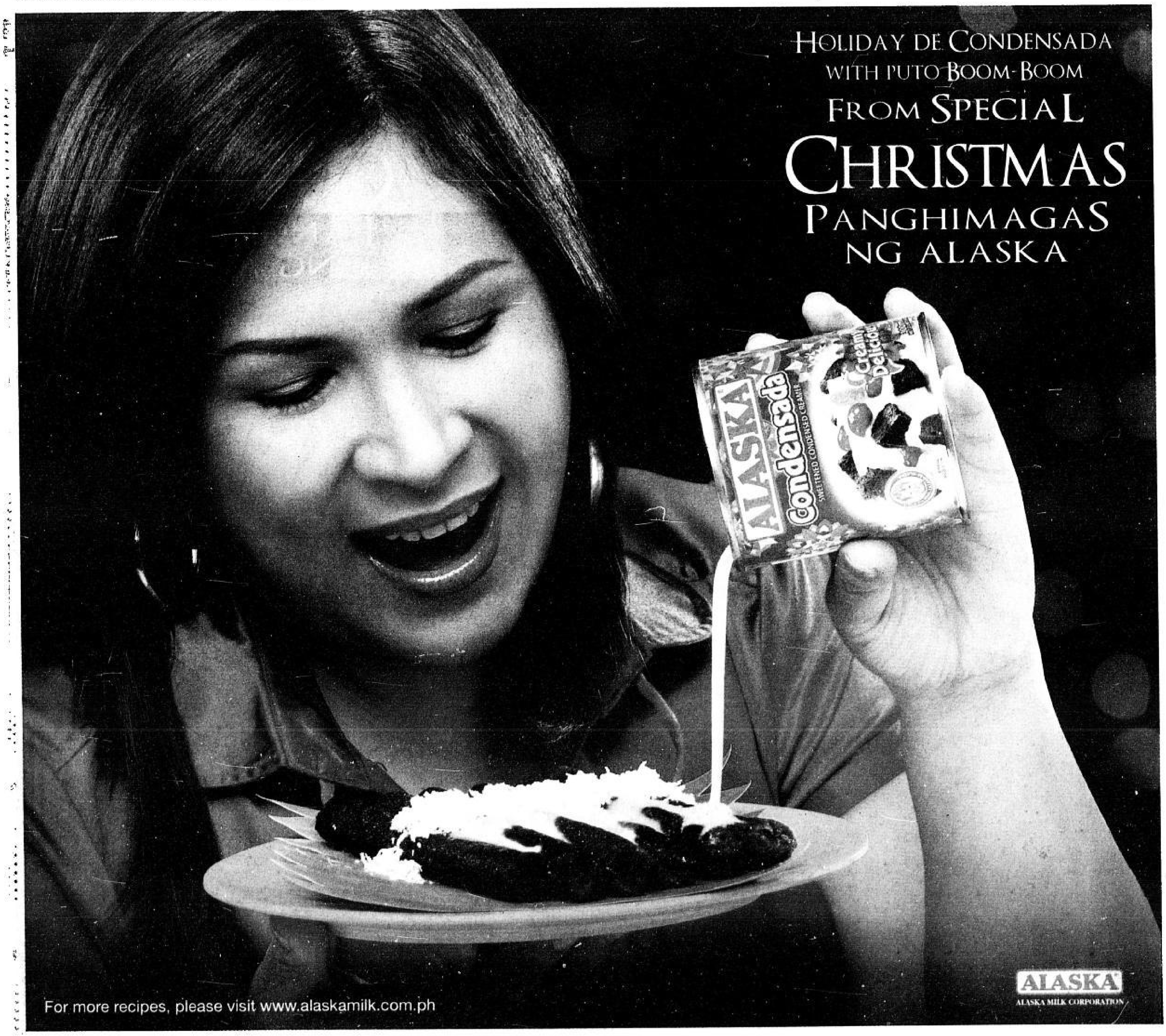
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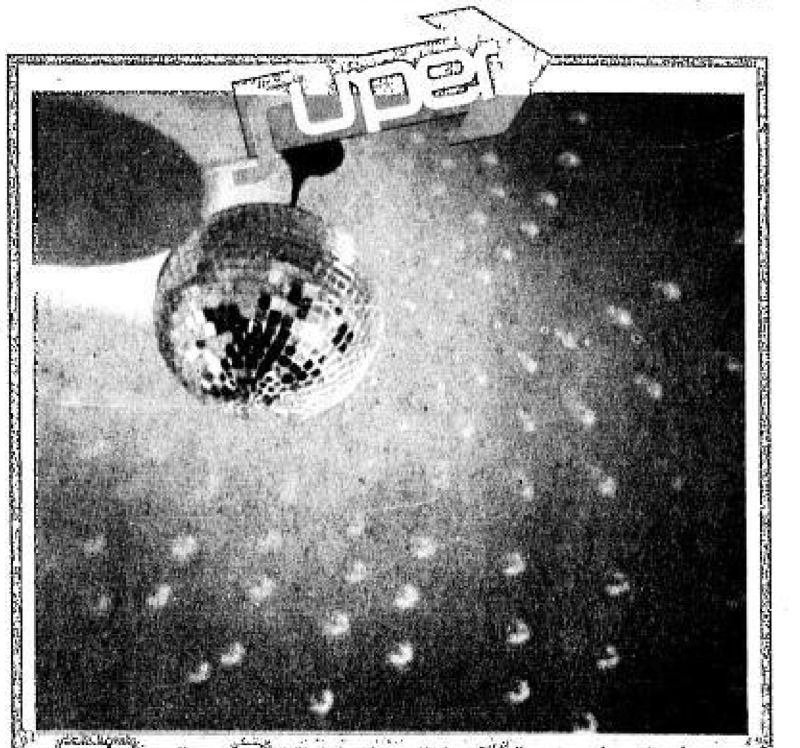
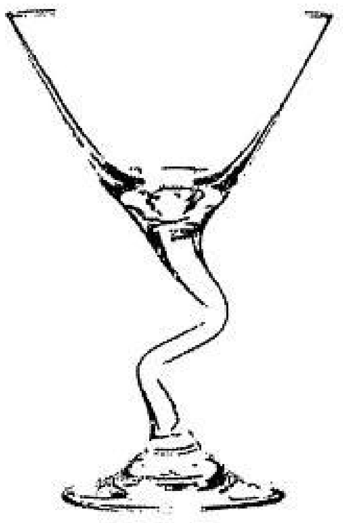


The Importance of Being Very Important

From page E3

The other room inside



Yet when social caterpillars get together and don The Attitude, it's hard not to control your eyes rolling so far behind your back that it touches your spine. And nowhere else do I feel this more than inside yet another room, the girls' bathroom.

The years have conditioned me to be terrified of this place, this scented den of lionesses, the central base of lipstick and gossip, the great equalizer by virtue of our collective need to heed Mother Nature's call. I found myself recently in line inside here, by another non-descript door. I was waiting, waiting for forever for that very important door to open. Finally after fifteen minutes had passed, I rapped my knuckles hard on the door. Suddenly, two very angry, jumpy girls had come out and in tandem had stared me down with the heavily-mascara'd Look of Death. I was absolutely aware that there is a throng of other girls behind me in the line, delightedly watching this stand-off. What else can one do but try to fight back—hopefully with more class and higher heels—in this silent game of territorial claim? In my head, a voice screamed out, who the f*** are you? And I could almost read their thoughts, "don't you know who I am?" Then I counter telepathically with "don't you know who I am ...*with*?" The winner of the showdown is obvious. Their heels were much higher, after all. My head is bloody, but unbowed.

What is most important, then, in these nocturnal habitats where the ground you stand on, and space you dance in, is emblematic of your perceived status in the world? It is knowing that your true worth is shown in the dignity held at those volatile moments. And it is also the fact that, big smile on your face, you know the bouncers personally, ensuring that those lipsticked female dogs will never hog the most important room ever again.

RULE # 7
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Making music with the boys

THE INTERNET HAS been around for ages but it's only recently that artists are recognizing its big role when it comes to music sharing. Imagine being heard not only in your home turf but also across the globe with just a click of a button!

Thanks to Nokia's Independent Artists Club (IAC), these artists now have a shot at amplifying their music, sharing it with a wider audience.

Presented by Nokia, the mobile music leader, IAC is meant to be the hub for new music for fresh homegrown talents in Asia. IAC gives new acts the means to be discovered through its exclusive IAC chart. For music lovers, it's a hunting ground for fresh sounds, a place to download free music and vote for the tracks you want to see at the top of the charts.

This week, Super together with Nokia Music's Independent Artists Club, lent their discerning ears to one of IAC's fastest rising independent bands, Hija.

Hija 101

Chesca Arnaldo on vocals, Reiman Gesmundo on guitar, Roni Paguta on bass, and Mecky Mecua on drums

"The band has been around since February 2007 but back then, it had a different lead singer and drummer whose schedules wouldn't jive. It was only until four months ago that the four of us got together to re-form Hija," shares Chesca. "Roni, the bassist sent a message to me in Friendster saying that I was referred to him by a friend so I auditioned for the band. Mecky, the drummer is an old friend of our guitarist, Reiman."

Current status

"When we don't have gigs, we go about our regular lives. Chesca produces and markets promos for a TV network's entertainment shows, Roni teaches Economics at UST, Reiman sells guitars and music gadgets online, and Mecky takes care of their land in Tagaytay."

Joy of Indie-pendence

"The best thing about being an indie band is that there are no rules. We can play *our* type of music. We can go crazy with the sounds without anyone having to dictate. There is no conformation whatsoever. We also own our time being an independent band. In the future, we would want to be publicly recognized. Why else make music if you can't share 'em?"

"We would describe our music as refreshing, something new to the ears—rifts of blues, beats of R&B, and the sound of soul. Though the term soul/blues came from the Westerns, our sound is truly Pinoy by heart. Our original songs are all in Tagalog and though some of our words are melancholic, we make sure that any listener can groove to our beat."

Whimsical, intoxicating

"For first time listeners our song Nahulog, which was composed by Roni, would be a great musical intro. It is a song anyone could relate to because it's about heartache. The twist we gave to it doesn't make it the depressing variety. In fact, it's whimsical and intoxicating."

Like Hija, sign up at the Independent Artists Club (IAC)! To upload your songs, go to www.nokia-asia.com/iac/submissions.

If you're just out to check the freshest tunes, you can even get the chance to bag a five-day trip for two to Sydney, Australia for the Good Vibrations Festival on Feb. 16, 2008. Just register from Dec. 6, 2007 to Jan. 17, 2008 and vote for your favorite track. Also up for grabs are two Nokia 5310 XpressMusic phones and two Nokia 5610 XpressMusic phones.

Get on board and visit the IAC website now at www.nokia.com.ph/iac.

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Christmas treat at Finio

THE FILIPINO TASTE BUD DESERVES to be treated once in a while to new and exciting fare, and that is what Finio accomplishes with its one-of-a-kind menu of otherwise regular dishes but with a unique twist, such as the "Sorpresa de Balot+", "Boneless Crispy Pata P398+, "Tilapia Strips P168+" plus a host of other dishes that will surely satisfy Pinoy cravings, whether it be local residents or *balikbayans*.

This season, come celebrate with Finio and enjoy sumptuous dishes prepared the way you like them. Situated along the busy stretch of Tomas Morato Avenue in Quezon City, Finio promises a hearty and relaxed dining experience.

Among the favorites and best sellers are the Pritson Maki Roll P148+, the Laing Pizza P288+, the Pancit Molo P188, the Crispy Hito 298+, and the Crab & Mango Salad P178+ to name a few. Folks with a sweet tooth will be delighted with Finio's Banana Langka Float P88+, crunchy-warm *turon* served in a martini glass with a generous scoop of vanilla ice cream

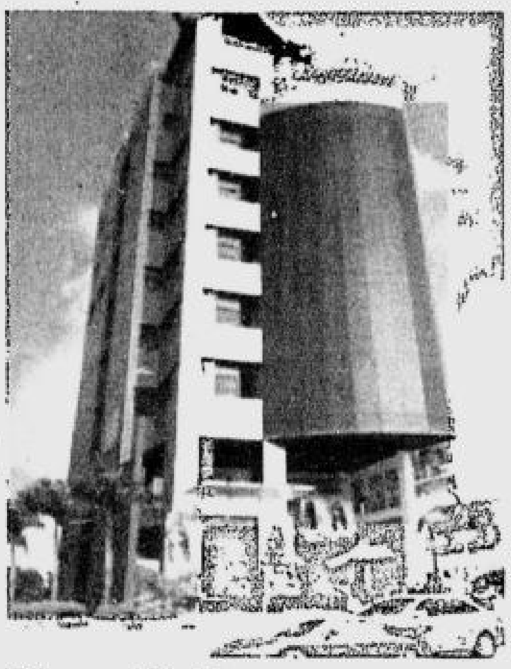
This Yuletide season, diners with a minimum purchase of P500 shall be given a free dessert of choice or a coupon for a free pritson on their next visit. Promo will run until Jan. 15, 2008.

So come and visit us, as we celebrate this Holiday season with our families and friends.

Finio Modern Pinoy Restaurant is at the corner of Tomas Morato Avenue and Dr. Lazcano St, Quezon City. Operating hours are from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. For inquiries, call 415-1278.

Crab and mango salad

Pritson Maki roll



Warm and inviting

STAR GARDEN TOWER HOTEL, A NAME which is known for a warm and inviting atmosphere—a haven of peace, tranquility and comfort at the center of commerce, trade and telecommunication of Quezon province. It's conveniently nestled at the heart of the city with business, commercial, shopping options and accessible from anywhere in Metro Manila. Star Garden Tower Hotel symbolizes the characteristics of excellence, of timeless elegance and gracious service. Star Garden Tower Hotel makes you feel you're our top priority.

Magical Christmas at the Manila Pavilion Hotel

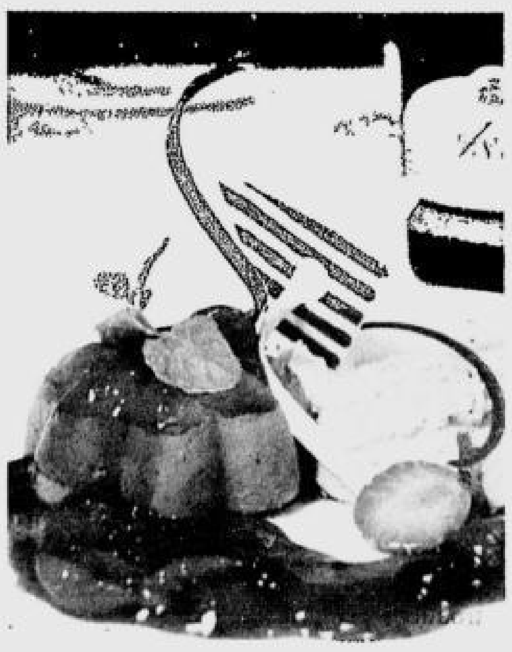
A WORLD OF MAKE BELIEVE AWAITS YOU at the Manila Pavilion because this holiday season, we are bringing to life the magical wonder of Christmas.

Welcoming you at the lobby is Santa's magical workshop where kids will enjoy watching different Santas as they prepare delightful toys and wonderful gifts. Plus, more thrilling treats and a marvelous sight are in store for your Yuletide excitement. A beautiful fairy will blow your mind, giving away surprises for kids at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

At the Patisserie, a sack of treats awaits you and your family. Honey-glazed Hams, Fruit Cakes, Chocolate Pralines, Whole Roast Turkeys and other Christmas goodies are available until Jan. 6, 2008. And on Dec. 24 and 31 after the Simbang Gabi at the hotel's Kapilya San Lorenzo Chapel, drop by at the Patisserie nipa hut for a fresh hot serving of Bibingka and Puto Bumbong.

An elegant feast is stirring at the Rotisserie. Pan-fried Goose Liver, Stuffed Beef Fillet in Red Wine, Roast US Prime Rib are only few of the delectable dishes that will satisfy your Yuletide Epicures. The Christmas Eve and Day set menu are available on Dec. 24 and 25, from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at only P2,888 per person, while the New Year's Eve and Day set menu are available on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1, from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at only P2,600 per person.

It's indeed a Magical Christmas here at the Manila Pavilion. For inquiries, call 526-1212 extension 2408.



Tia Maria's Launches Kiddie Parties

TIA MARIA'S SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED ITS KIDDIE birthday party packages for kids of all ages! For only P250 to P299 per head, how can you go wrong? This is the perfect way to have a unique and affordable birthday treat, complete with balloons, a party streamer, invitations, loot bags, and a piñata! Not only that, party celebrators have the options to bring in acrobatic clowns, magicians, puppet shows, glitter tattoos, balloon twisting, and a list of other fun party favors! For the food, kids can choose from Kiddie 1 which serves quesadillas with barbeque and nacho chips, Kiddie 2 consisting of an enchilada with barbecue, rice, and nacho chips, Kiddie 3 with spaghetti, fried chicken, and fries, Kiddie 4 serving a heaping plateful of a cheese burger, chicken, two taquitos, and fries, or Kiddie 5 which offers a big burrito, two taquitos, and nacho chips. Celebrate parties the Tex-Mex way! Simply call the Party Specialists at Tia Maria's outlets in Ermita (525-7389), Remedios (522-0429), SM City Baguio (074 619-7681), SM Megamall (635-2326), and Tia Maria's Cantina in Katipunan Avenue (426-2350).

SAMPLE FRESH FARE AT FISH OUT OF WATER IN GREENBELT 5

The freshest restaurant which has been receiving raves in the newly opened Greenbelt 5 in Glorietta is Fish out of Water, Red Crab's venture into a more sophisticated seafood dining experience. Inspired by "fish-out-of-water stories" about the first wave of Filipino immigrants in the United States who escaped Spanish ships during the 1760s and brought their culture and cuisine in the Swamps of Louisiana, Fish out of Water offers New World recipes and the best of the Philippine seafood and ingredients. Fish out of Water is Red Crab's venture into a more sophisticated seafood dining experience but more than that, it is Red Crab's small way of paying tribute to a nation of voyagers and conquerors. Fish out of Water is a way of saluting how great people from a small nation can embrace and champion global colors, flavors, cultures and ways of lives.

More fun in the Boracay sun

More rooms, better facilities and additional options for dining and leisure are sure to lure many of Boracay's visitors to come and experience the Regency ambiance.

Boracay Regency Beach Resort and Convention Center chair and president Henry Chusuey announces the resort's ongoing programs to improve its facilities and services. This is in line with Boracay Regency's continuous measures to ensure its guests "experience the luxury" while staying at the Regency.

"We want to be able to give our guests the best value for their money. I have always believed that you should always charge the customers what you're worth, don't cheat or overcharge them," Chusuey comments.

First of the new developments is the Regency Garden Wing. This new wing is on its own a lush, tropical paradise designed to cater to discriminating tourists, traveling businessmen and families on holiday. It has 90 spacious rooms offering a full view of a fresh, green and bountiful garden and stunning swimming pools with a Jacuzzi and a sunken pool bar, from its private terraces. There are 18 rooms and suites with direct access to the swimming pool. This addition made Boracay Regency the biggest Triple A rated resort along the beach front of Boracay with 285 rooms. The resort is strategically located at the middle of the island and has the longest beachfront of about 125 meters. It has 3 crystal clear swimming pools. It also has Boracay's first underground beach disco bar called Wave with KTV rooms inside. The disco includes an open-air area for al fresco dining and partying. Other food outlets are the Café Christina that offers international cuisine and the Regency Food Plaza with choices of Chinese, Japanese and Korean cuisine.

Boracay Regency has the first and only convention center in the island that can accommodate 700 people with smaller rooms for intimate functions.

With all these improvements, Chusuey hopes to draw more visitors to experience the Regency brand of hospitality. For inquiries, log on to www.boracayregency.com or call (036) 2886111 to (032) 5231234.

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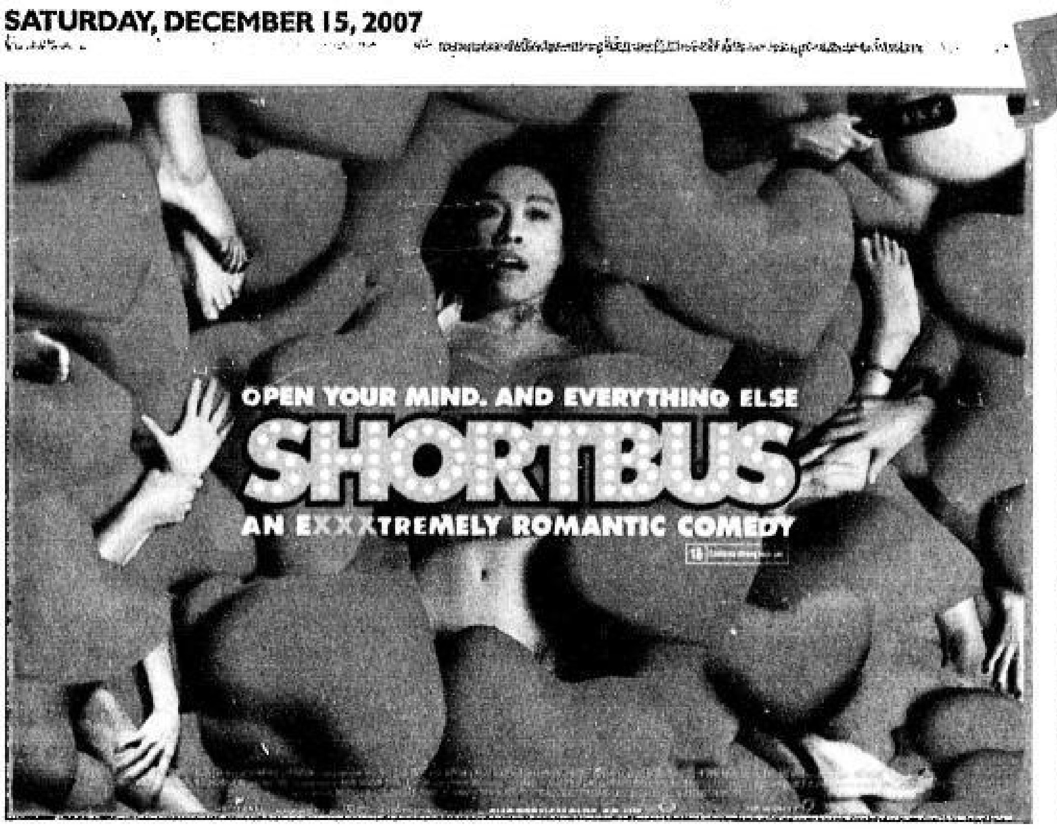
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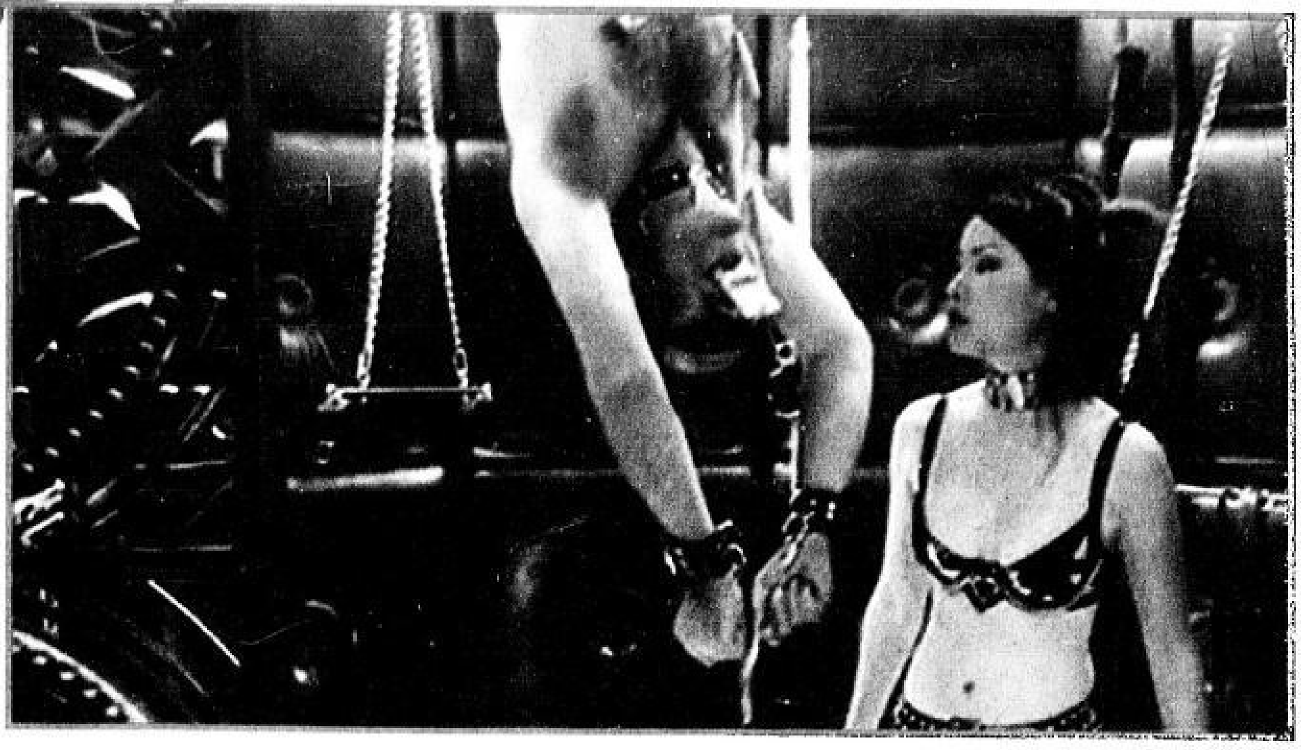

Aboard the Orient Express

Hypersexual Asians and other Pop Cultural Fictions

By Bobby Benedicto

AMERICAN TEEN FILMS are like crib notes for anthropologists, particularly those interested in trendy words like "multiculturalism." Take for instance that quintessential scene where the new student is toured around the cafeteria. At first glance, such scenes treat us to nothing more than overly rehearsed images of high school hierarchies. Jocks, nerds, rebels—we're all familiar with these cardboard cutouts. But these days, the virtual map of the cafeteria is a bit more complicated, featuring new scenes, subcultures, movements, and, most interestingly, races, all laid out like zoo animals for easy visual ethno-consumption.

Teen America's new racial cartography is perhaps best seen in 2004's "Mean Girls," which introduced the world to "cool Asians." When I first caught this reference I wanted to pat Tina Fey on the back and thank her for finally acknowledging that not all Asian kids are math geeks. But then I realized that the "cool Asians" in Mean Girls were non-English speaking women who slept with middle-aged, out-of-shape gym teachers. Yep, it turns out Fey's "cool Asian" isn't a new kid on the block. She's the old stereotype of the Asian woman, but with rebonded hair and some newfound cultural capital.

Commodified supersexual women

This really shouldn't have come as much of a surprise. Global pop culture, after all, doesn't make much room for Asian sexuality except in the form of commodified supersexual women. 1999's "Payback" saw Lucy Liu take the Asian dominatrix out of the world of porn and into mainstream media. A year later she reprised this role as one of Charlie's Angels, much to the delight of audiences the world over. Indeed, a truly global audience seems to adore the stereotype of sluttish Asians. Filipinos certainly do. And not just teenage boys with large collections of Japanese porn, either. We all consume and clap for the global dualist image of Asian women as goddesses/slaves. If you don't believe me, then just think long and hard about what it was we were cheering for when Lea Salonga won a Tony for Miss Saigon.

Miss Saigon actually works as a powerful example of how overarching stereotypes about Asian women are. When you boil it down, what does the use of Filipinos as stand-ins for wartime Vietnamese prostitutes illustrate if not the interchangeability of Asian women? Clearly, it doesn't matter where Asian women are from. They're all the same and they all have or ought to have some semblance of Oriental hypersexuality. Those who don't, like Sandra Oh, are punished, in her case by being listed by Maxim as one of the unsexiest women in Hollywood by virtue of her "boyish" frame.

Canning images of sexual minorities

Even "progressive" queer films are guilty of slippages between Asian nationalities and hypersexuality. You would expect "The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert" (1994), a film about drag queens roadtripping across the Australian outback, not to rely on canned images of sexual minorities. But halfway through the film, the drag queens run into a middle-aged local married to an Asian woman. We're told that the woman is a Thai sex worker, not directly, but by having her climb onto a bar and shoot ping-pong balls from her nether regions. Interestingly, however, the woman doesn't speak Thai. She speaks fluent Tagalog! Either the filmmakers thought that viewers wouldn't be able to tell the difference or worse that those differences didn't really matter.

Not all films, however, depict Asian women as naturally hypersexual. J. Cameron Mitchell's "Shortbus" (2006) stars Sook-Yin Lee as Sofia, a sex therapist unable to have orgasms. The film follows her and a ragtag bunch of disaffected queer New Yorkers as they come to terms with love, sex, and death. At the end of the film, just as all the other characters' conflicts reach their resolutions, we find Sofia sitting on a park bench pleasuring herself in the midst of a Manhattan-wide blackout. When she finally reaches orgasm, the whole city lights up and triumphant music starts playing. All is right with the world, the film seems to say, Sofia is finally a properly improper Asian woman.

But the discourses on Asian sexuality cover men just as much as women. Gay Asian men, for instance, are routinely feminized and depicted as hairless, potato-loving boi-wonders. A fellow postgraduate working on this area makes it a point to include in his academic presentations the cover of a popular Asian gay porn magazine. It features a "barely legal" Japanese boy with a caption which I can't quote here but which includes the words: white, Asian, tight, pound, and a synonym for penis.

Like the dominatrix, this image has migrated to the mainstream, albeit in a more insidious manner. Last year's adaptation of Frank Miller's "300" attracted plenty of fanboys in Manila, many of whom seemed on the verge of donning capes and brandishing spears in defense of "freedom." Unfortunately, Filipino boys aren't exactly seen as Greco-warrior material by Miller or director Zack Snyder. Indeed, the film casts the "East" as the enemy, not simply by virtue of historical fact, but by its connection to all those vile characteristics embodied by Xerxes, that gender-bending, gay mystic who hangs out with lesbians and who welcomes all sorts of queer bodies. The heroes, of course, are the hypermasculine militarists, heteros (unlike those boy-loving Athenians, we're told) who uncoincidentally happen to come from the "West's" imagined birthplace.

It appears that for global pop culture, Asian male sexuality has to come in the form of a feminized queerness or not at all. That's why in Mean Girls, the Asian boys were denied "coolness" and relegated to the cafeteria table for asexual Asian nerds.

Desire for the castrated Asian male

I can think of only one mainstream representation of heterosexual Asian men as objects of sexual desire. Surprisingly, it's from an early episode of "The OC," when the character Taylor takes a Korean popstar to their prom. "He's got this wonderfully hairless body," she says. "It's like hooking up with a seal." Could this perhaps be that long-awaited acknowledgement of Asian male virility? Perhaps, except the penises of seals are only famous for one thing: being cut into cross-sections, dried, crushed into powder, and sold as a Chinese delicacy. Taylor's desire for the Korean popstar turns out to be a desire for the castrated Asian male.

There is, of course, nothing wrong with being a dominatrix or a gender-bending queer mystic or a slut or a eunuch. But there is something perverse about how we direct anger at programs that are smart enough to mock images of Asian sluttishness (e.g. The Daily Show) and at the same time blindly eat up films that reiterate those same images, except with less wit and pop cultural savvy.

Uncritically rehearsed images are subtler and hence far more dangerous. Just ask the hundreds of Asian girls who've been expected to have some kind of special erotic knowledge, or gaysians who've had to fend off unwanted advances, or straight boys who've hopelessly pined after blonde cheerleaders. Better yet, pop by Greenbelt and check out some of the action at Café Havana.

In today's image economy, clichés have very real effects. They do more than alternately entertain and insult us. They also make possible the racial discontent which threads through modern sexual politics.

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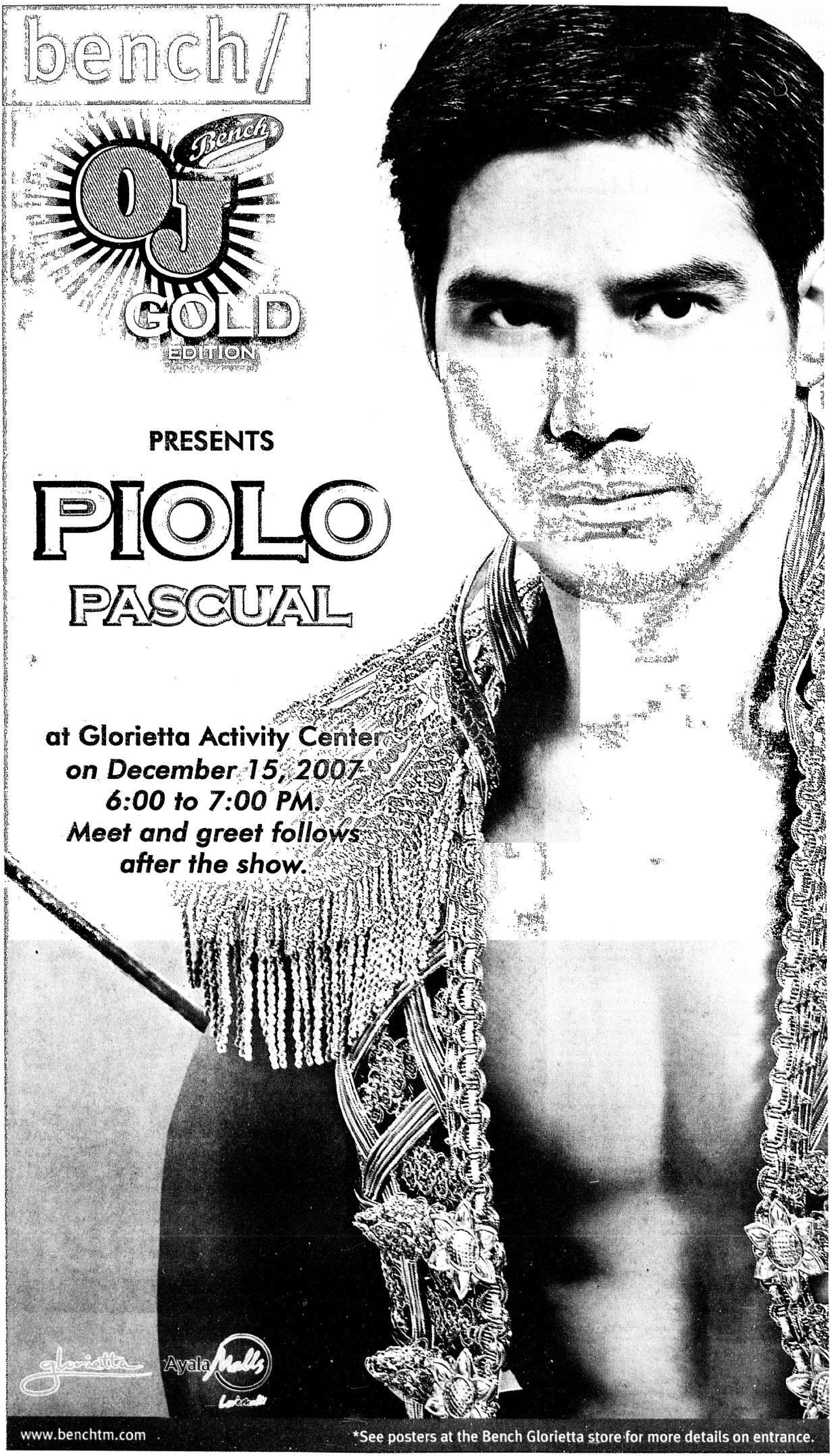

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SPACE INVADERS

The New Rising Sun

Jozu, the newest Japanese restaurant in Manila sets the standard for affordable Japanese cuisine

By Juana R. Manahan

JAPANESE FOOD IS A CUISINE that cannot be done in a mediocre standard. Very expensive usually means imported sashimi at a high price while cheap means over-battered tempura and sashimi sprinkled with salmonella. It was not until I tried the recently opened Jozu that good quality and affordable prices had been merged in a Japanese restaurant.

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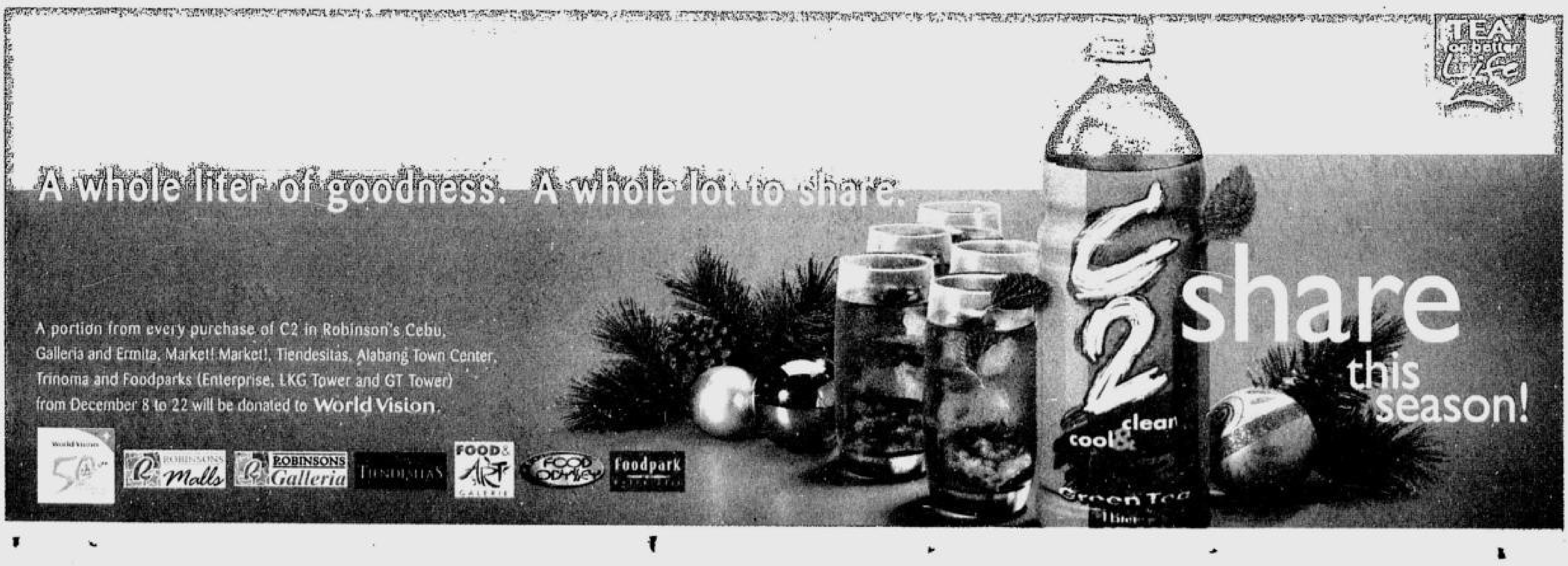

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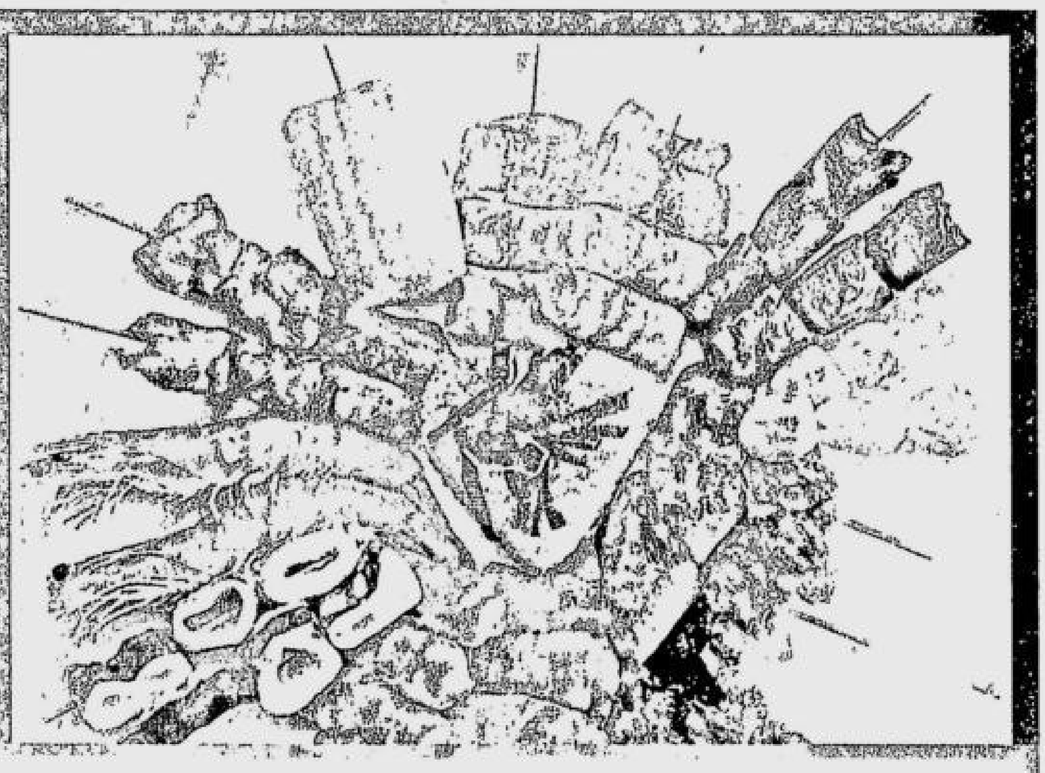


The New Rising Sun

From page G1

Modern Japanese

Open for only about three weeks, Jozu sits on a busy corner of Tomas Morato and Mother Ignacia in Quezon City. The clean, understated minimalist facade alone differentiates it from the loud fast food beer gardens that are around the area.

Upon entering one will notice a wood slaving that wraps the wall, similar to a large woven mat. A kind of modern twist to Japanese inspired design.

The restaurant actually looks more like a modern Zen inspired house rather than a traditional tea house with paper lanterns and Japanese banners that hit you over the head when you enter the restaurant.

Another thing that was missing was the lack of blood curdling "YOSHIMASE" when guests enter, which was a refreshing change. The staff does say it, but at a decent decibel level.

A great selling point about Jozu is that it's open until 2 a.m. and still offers a full menu.

The upstairs is the smoking section which will most likely turn into the bar area. While the restaurant seems perfect to me as it is, they will be adding a longer sushi bar and adding a few things to the second floor.

No Compromises

"Jozu" in Japanese means skillful. The Japanese are a people of perfection, from the ancient tradition of Samurai sword making where a perfect blade was made, from casting the iron at the exact heat, to the manufacturing of the high tech gizmos we now enjoy. Jozu's contribution to Japanese restaurants in the Philippines is to exhibit a new kind of standard.

Growing up with father Vic Villavicencio, owner Veejay Villavicencio is no stranger to the food business. "Quality is important to me and I am very strict, especially when it comes to the sushi and sashimi," he says.

From the side of my eye, an authentic looking Japanese sushi chef gives me a slight bow and smile. The sushi is indeed as fresh as it would be at pricier places. "Our average bill here goes from about P250 to P300 and people are shocked!" exclaims Veejay.

There is certainly no compromise when it comes to the food. The sashimi is as fresh as it would be in more high-end Japanese places. The food arrives as fresh looking as it does in the photos in the menu.

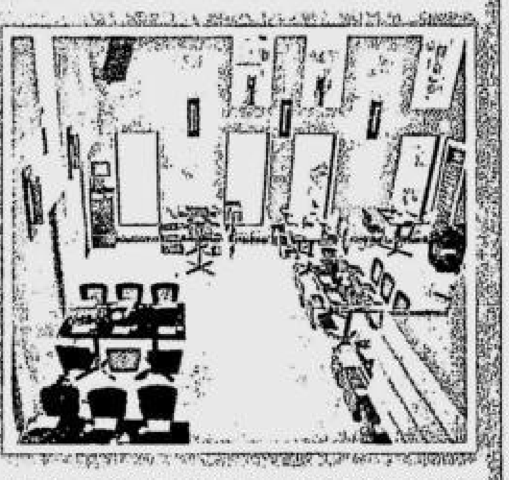
I am usually afraid of trying nouvelle cuisine Japanese concoctions for fear that they contain gobs of mayonnaise, fake crab and overripe mango. I was completely shocked when I wiped out a plate of their tempura maki. Instead of the whole fried shrimp wrapped in rice, only the crunchy bits are sprinkled on top—a great trick that fools the brain into thinking that you are eating a whole tempura but without the extra oil and batter.

Another favorite was the kani wrapped in bacon, cooked in the Japanese grill style. The teppan dishes and tempura are clean and less greasy, a far cry from the overly oily food in other establishments. Jozu specializes in robatayaki or Japanese grilled dishes.

The biggest surprise for me was the fried tempura ice cream, which I hadn't had since childhood. Others tried and failed miserably, and I never bothered to order it again. Jozu's tempura ice cream was perfect, the exact mixture of ice cream sweetness and tartness. The more I ate, the more I thought to myself I could really love this place.

So will you.

Jozu is located at 239 Tomas Morato cor. E. Lopez St. Near ABS-CBN compound, QC. For inquiries, call 376-6351 or 376-0357.



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As always, every combo is completely satisfying with a slice of Cake Roll and your favorite drink. It's absolutely a welcome addition to its growing Red Meal Deal menu, including dine-in favorites, Savory Tocino, Meaty Dinuguan, Salisbury Steak, Classic Caldereta, Daing na Bangus and a whole lot more.

As pasalubong, potluck or party food, bring in also the Chicken Lollipops 20-piece Bucket-to-Go! Affordably priced (Php 500), it's a guaranteed bestseller along with Red Ribbon's all-time Platters-to-Go favorites: Palabok, Spaghetti, Creamy Carbonara and Cheesy Lasagna.

With all these delicious happenings in Red Ribbon, you can surely expect even more beautiful things to come. So if you're looking forward to great, "feel good" food, just feel free to visit your nearest branch today or call us at 8-77-77 (Metro Manila Delivery only) and we'll just have whatever cake, bread and pastry, celebration meal that tickles your fancy delivered to you just in time.

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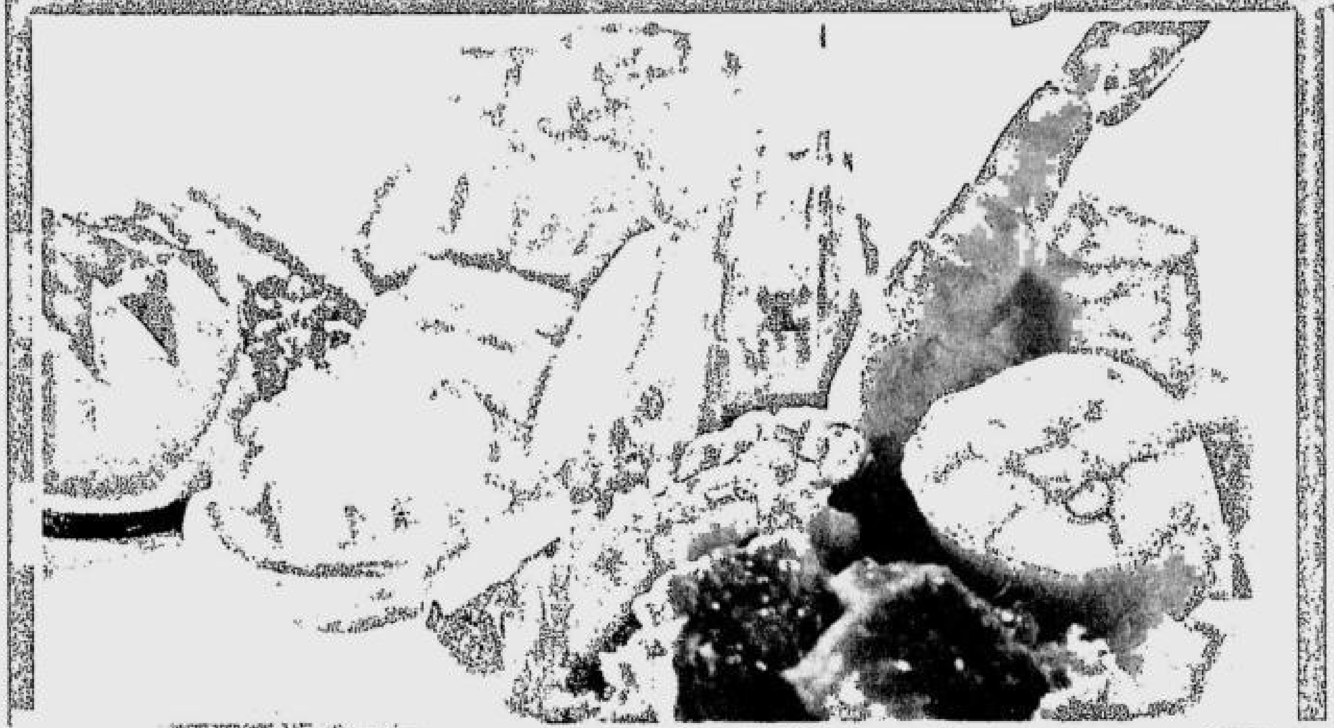

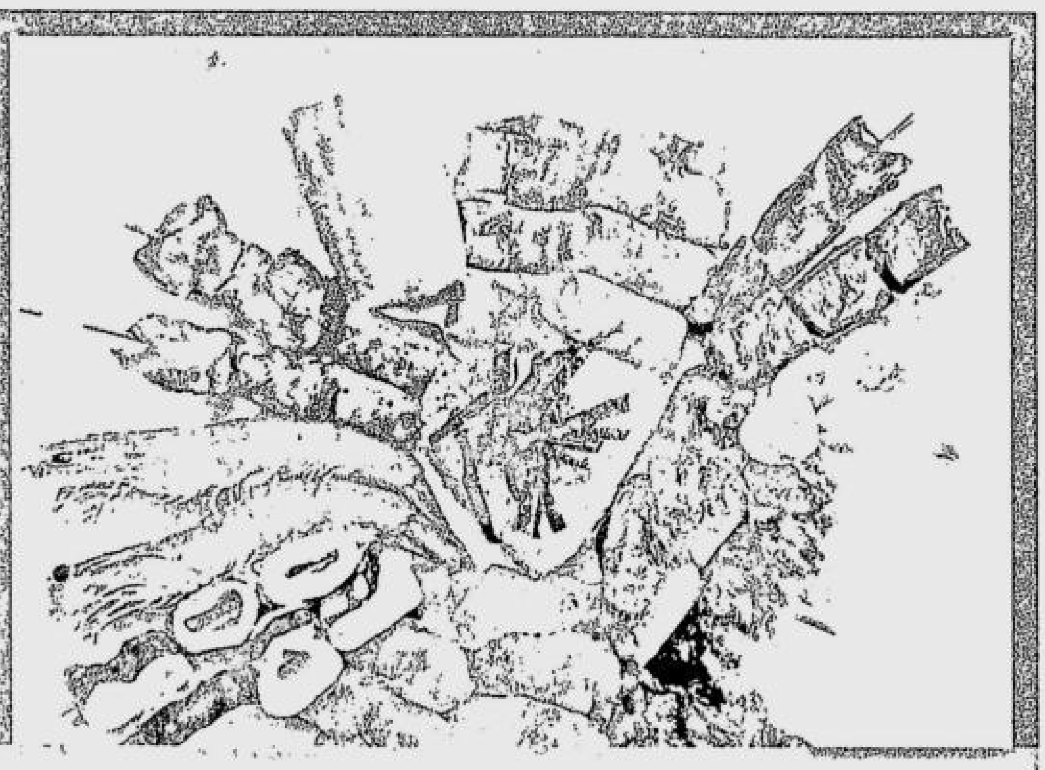

The New Rising Sun

From page G1

Modern Japanese

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No Compromises

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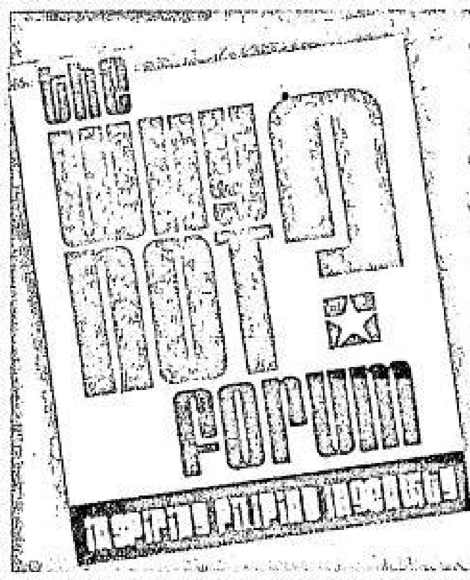
24/7 SUPER RADAR

By Janine Cuenca-Dario and Stef Juan



FEEL the urge to stand up and ask, "Why not?" along with young professionals, artists, thinkers, dreamers at **The Why Not? Forum** [illegible] from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. today at Magnum Café Bonifacio High Street (2/F B3, Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig; T: 856-3400 or (0920) 979 3400). This is your chance to mingle and talk with experts from various fields including master illusionist Erik Mana, Leonardo Co, an ethnobotanist (expert on the relationships between plants and humans), Animation Council of the Philippines president Grace Dimaranan, Jomar Legaspi, the founder of [illegible], and the Philippine Everest team. There is a P300 entrance fee that includes a drink.

Get a **TASTE** of the world-class talent that won the 2007 European Grand Prix for Choral Singing when the **UP Madrigal Singers** take the stage at the Cultural Center of Philippines Main Theater on Dec. 18 at 8 p.m. The Mads, as they are also known, is your best bet in bringing yourself some Christmas cheer. Information and tickets: CCP Box Office 832-3704, or Ticketworld 891-9999. The Power Plant Mall in Rockwell, Makati, will also be featuring choirs singing the best loved carols of the season at its North Court with the Children's Choir at 6 p.m. on Dec. 15 and the Ateneo Boys Choir at 6 p.m. on Dec. 16. For more information, call 898-1702.

PASKONG PINOY

EXPERIENCE Simbang Gabi, the ultimate Pinoy Christmas tradition next to Noche Buena. Feel the chilly air in the grounds of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) and dig in to the traditional breakfast of *puto bumbong* and *bibingka* after the dawn Masses. It's all part of the Paskong Pinoy festival that's starting on Dec. 16 to 24 at 5 a.m. at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Main Building Ramp (T: 832-1125 loc. 1420-[illegible]).

HEAR a different sound of Christmas in a big brass band way when well-loved singing group **The Company** teams up with a 10-piece band ensemble in the concert musically entitled "A Very Horny Christmas" tonight at 8 p.m. at the Music Museum (Greenhills Shopping Center; T: 721-0635). There will be jazz, swing, OPM, some classical, a bit of Broadway and some awesome a cappella all in just one evening. Guest performers Eugene Villaluz, saxophonist Michael Guevarra and [illegible] are there to join in the fun.

PINOY

SEE just how far you can get through your daunting Christmas list with all the unique Pinoy finds at the **Global "Paskong" Pinoy Dazaar.** Today's their last day so you'd better get cracking and make sure that at 5 p.m., you're at the Night Market under the Ayala Park Tent in front of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel and 6750 building. This is organized by Yabang Pinoy (M: 0917-8151513, www.yabangpinoy.com, E: yabangpinoy@gmail.com)

Schedules are subject to change without prior notice. For more information [illegible] Pick up your free copy of 24/7 Nocturnal Navigator at [illegible] malls, bars and restaurants. You may also text 24/7 [illegible] to 2366 [illegible] Globe and Sun and 296 [illegible] Smart. Submit your schedules [illegible] to [illegible] mag24 [illegible] or mag24_7@yahoo.com for inclusion in this column.

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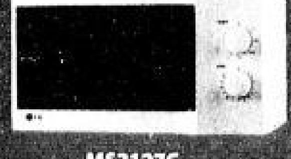
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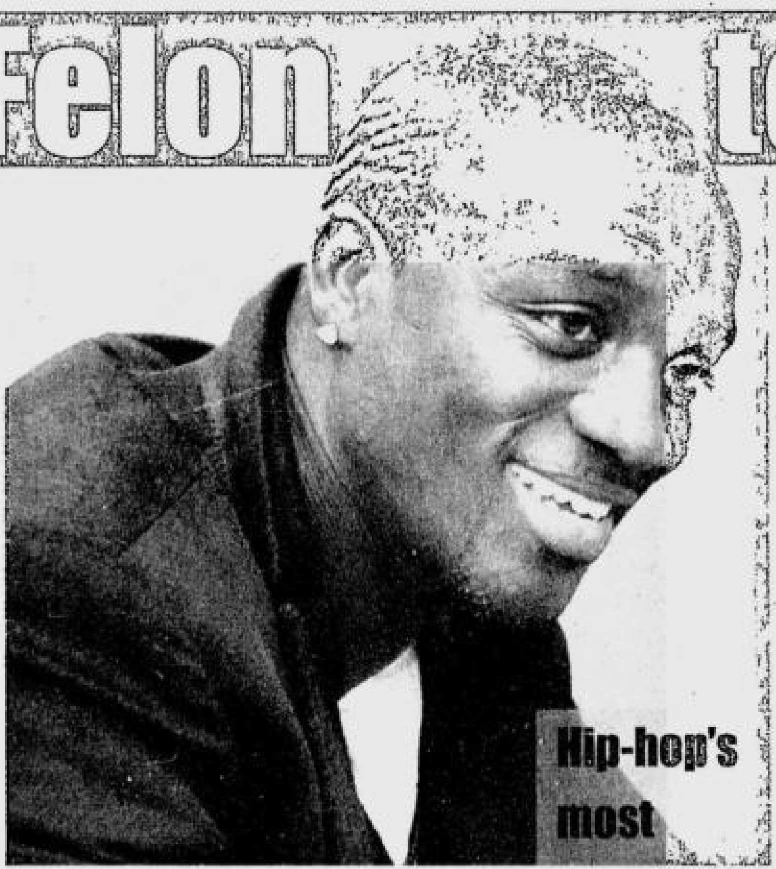

Hip-hop's most sought-after R&B singer on cars, public life and Snoop Dogg

By Christian Brazil Bautista

NOWADAYS, HIT SONGS SEEM TO have one common denominator—the nasal croons of R&B singer Akon. The Senegal native, who blew through the country with a one-night concert at the Araneta Coliseum last Nov. 29, is all over the charts, churning out his own hit tunes in addition to appearing in successful tracks from a slew of different artists.

A former car thief who rose to become the toast of hip-hop, Akon, born Aliaune Thiam, served time in a Georgia state penitentiary before being released in late 2002. Upon getting out of prison, he was immediately signed to a record deal, his debut highlighted by the hit single "Locked Up." Developing a reputation rooted on irresistible hooks, he is now a Top 40 fixture, collaborating on popular tracks with artists such as Eminem, Wyclef Jean and Gwen Stefani.

How did you get started as a musician?

To this day, I still can't answer that question. I really don't know. Because it started off as a hobby, something I was doing for fun. Next thing you know, I find myself out here. I'm still trying to figure this out. It naturally just kind of happened. It's weird. It's hard to explain. I never even wanted to be an artist at one point. It just happened, gradually. As a hobby then before you know it, I ended up doing it professionally.

What do you mean you didn't even want to be an artist? What else did you want to be?

I just wanted to be rich. I didn't care how. That was my state of mind then. Then I thought about it, I was pretty good at basketball so I wanted to be a professional basketball player. But that didn't really work out. I got injured. So music was like the only thing that I could really do. At that particular time, I think that's how I got in when I realized that as a convicted felon I couldn't get a regular job like everybody else. So I had to find the talent that I was really good at, to find that and concentrate on it.

Your family moved to the States when you were 7. What was that like?

That just was hard, man. It was like one of the hardest adjustments I've ever had to make because I was coming from a whole different environment. A different way of living, the different perspective of how we saw life and how we cherish family; whereas in the US, everyone was on their own, it was a totally different environment. Even as a kid, it was hard to make that adjustment if you don't understand the culture.

Why do you put in details of your personal life in your songs?

My personal life is at a point where it's so exciting that people want to know about it now. I think the songs are going to get a lot more interesting depending on the situation. But even then, I've got to be careful which situations I allow to be put out to the public. Sometimes the translation comes back different. But there's definitely going to be a lot of situations that people would want to hear about.

What do you mean the translation comes back different?

It happens all the time. I've experienced that with the Trinidad issue, with the Poughkeepsie, New York issue. That's just from history. I've seen it where it comes back and sometimes makes you turn out to look like the bad guy. It depends on how the situation is translated to people. It's very important. You don't want the people to get the wrong perception.

How long were you in prison?

Altogether, it was about three years. It's feels great though, just to know that I'm in a life now where I actually control it. To know that you're in a situation where you control your whole destiny, it's a beautiful thing. I just love the fact that I'm in control of my life whereas before, when you're locked up in prison you're not really in control. And that's a bad feeling when you can't control your own movements, you know what I mean?

What kind of cars did you take then?

It was a lot of high line cars. I didn't really believe in taking small cars. If you're gonna do it, you might as well do it big. I don't care what profession you're in. It was high-line like Mercedes Benzs, Porsches, BMWs, Ferraris.

What was the car you were driving when you got caught?

I was driving a BMW. It was actually a small-class, BMW 325. Why I was in that car I have no idea. It is funny, because I'm normally in a faster car than that. But I think it was meant for me to get caught that day. That's why I was in that car.

When were you released?

I came out at the end of 2002. Then I immediately got a record deal. It came out by the end of 2003, and I've been working ever since. It feels good, mainly because I'm free. I'm a lot more successful now than I was before even when I got in. And my life is in order, to a point where I can completely see it. I don't have to worry about all the accomplishments being taken away from me. So it's a good thing.

You worked with Snoop Dogg on "I Wanna Love You." What was that like?

Snoop was an incredible guy. He's like a big brother to me. Incredibly experienced; he's been in the game a long time, real fun dude to work with. And he makes the vibe very comfortable. He's somebody I've always wanted to work with. So we got a chance to actually do collaboration.

Did you partake of Snoop Dogg's favorite vice?

No. Actually, I don't drink, I don't smoke. I had a separate room, sealed. So he can smoke (laughs).

Why are you so clean?

I never really had a reason for it. I never understood, like, what the idea was or how it can help me advance. I never drank. I never smoked.

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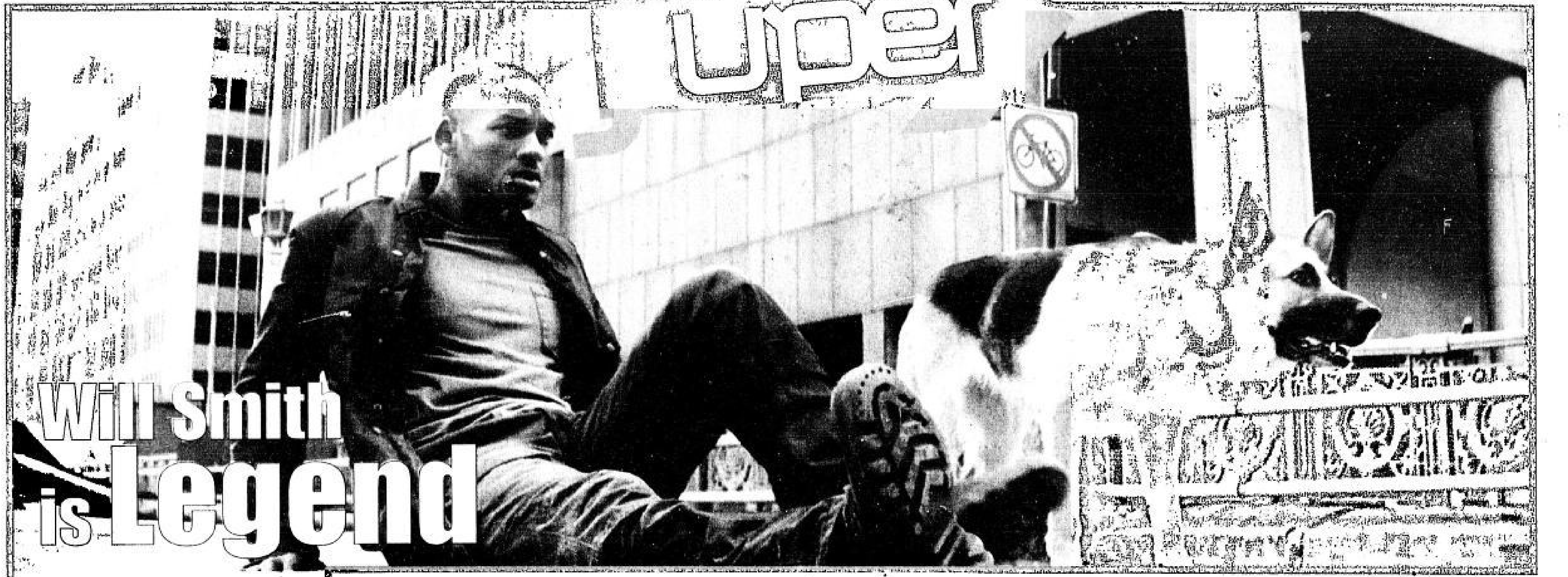

Will Smith is Legend

By Wanggo Gallaga
Photos courtesy of Warner Bros.

IF NEW YORK WAS EMPTY AND you are the last person on Earth, what would you do? Will Smith opted to grab a 9-iron and drill golf balls through the city. He got that chance during the filming for "I Am Legend," his new film opening on Jan. 9.

"I Am Legend" tells the story of Robert Neville, a military scientist who may very well be the last man on the planet. Like other post-apocalyptic science fiction films, "I Am Legend" explores the horrid reality of being all alone. The film is based on the book by Richard Matheson and the two films that were inspired by it: 1964's "The Last Man on Earth" with Vincent Price and 1971's "Omega Man" with Charlton Heston. While the film has its share of mutant zombies, the movie is not at all what is expected. It has its fair share of action sequences and scary moments but, essentially, this is a character piece, pretty much a one-man show.

Afraid of the dark

"I think this movie can connect with people because it reaches into that memory of the time when your parents tuck you in at night and then they switch off the lights and they leave the room and you're all alone in the dark," Will explains in the ballroom of the Grand Hyatt in Hong Kong where the Asian press screening was held. He adds, "You could have been 3-months-old or 9-months-old or 2-years-old, it is connected to the primal instinct and feelings about the dark. I think everyone will be able to connect to that at some level."

Will Smith is not the kind of person you would imagine being alone. Within his 6'1 frame, the two-time Oscar nominee bleeds charm. He looks you directly in the eye and gives you a warm smile. He is constantly joking and as a reporter asks "How do you deal with unwanted attention?" Will quickly replies, "Do I look like I have problems with unwanted attention? I love this job. There's sometimes bad timing but I have been lucky that I've been approached by people with love. The only person who I envy is Tiger Woods. I would give up all of this for a second if I could be Tiger Woods because I love golf and I suck at it."

In "I Am Legend," Will Smith fills the screen acting opposite a German shepherd for most of the film. Hailed as the most successful actor today by director Francis Lawrence and reaching top five in the Forbes' Smartest People in Hollywood list, the film is another showcase of Smith's capacity to juggle serious acting while utilizing his box office credibility.

The film, in itself, is a monster of a concept. Other than computer-generated mutants, the biggest challenge was to empty out the city of New York. This is not your run of the mill big-budget event film, though. The movie uses the suspense/science fiction setting to tell the story of a man dealing with solitude.

How did you prepare for the role of Robert Neville?

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Have you ever experienced that kind of fear and solitude?

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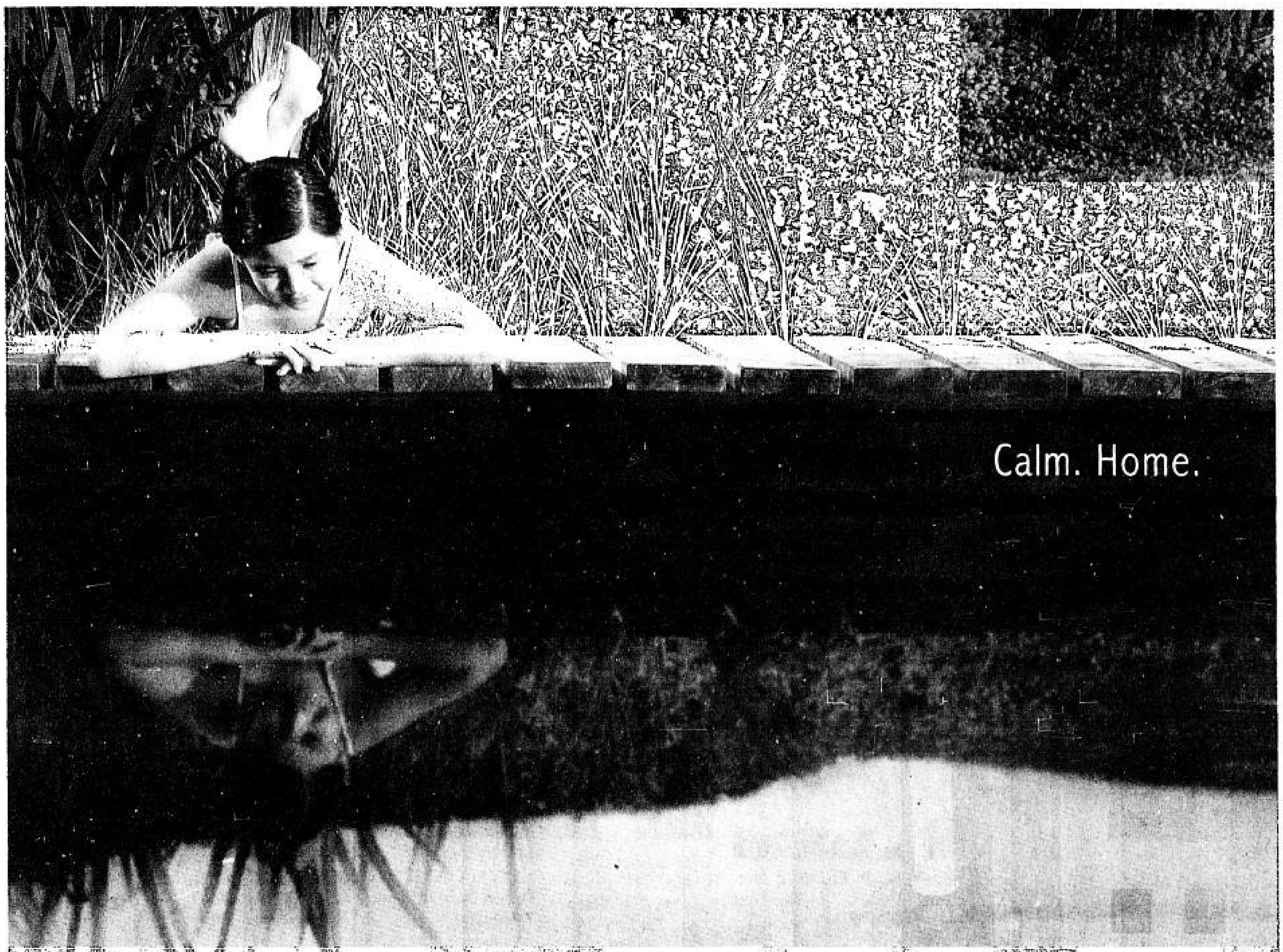
WILL/H3



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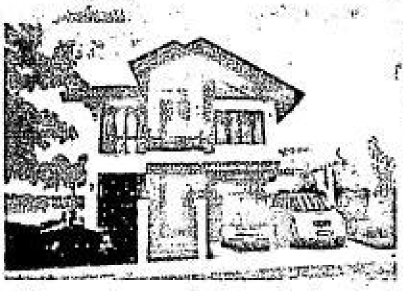

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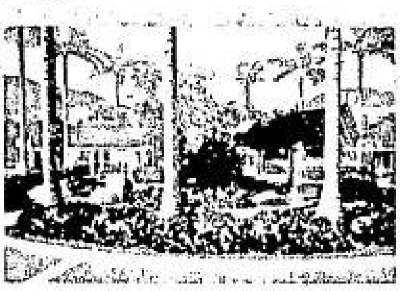

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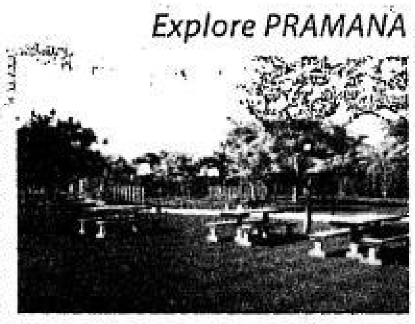

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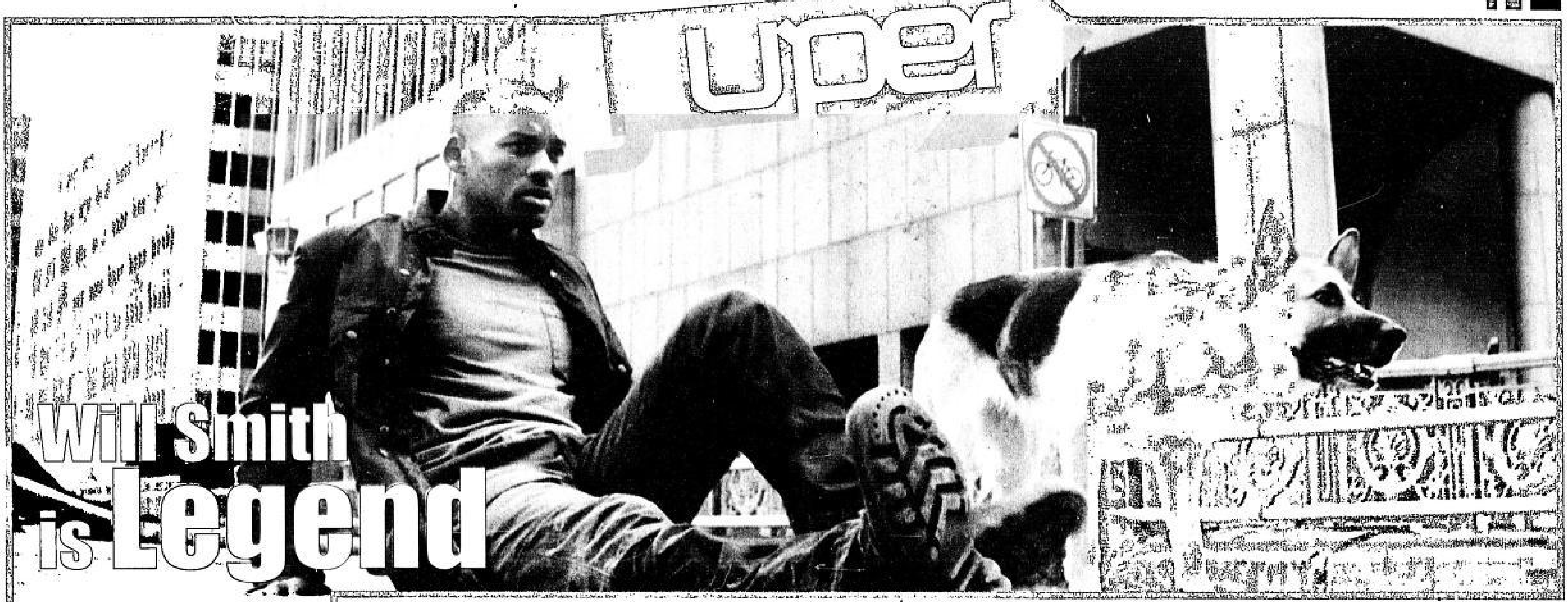

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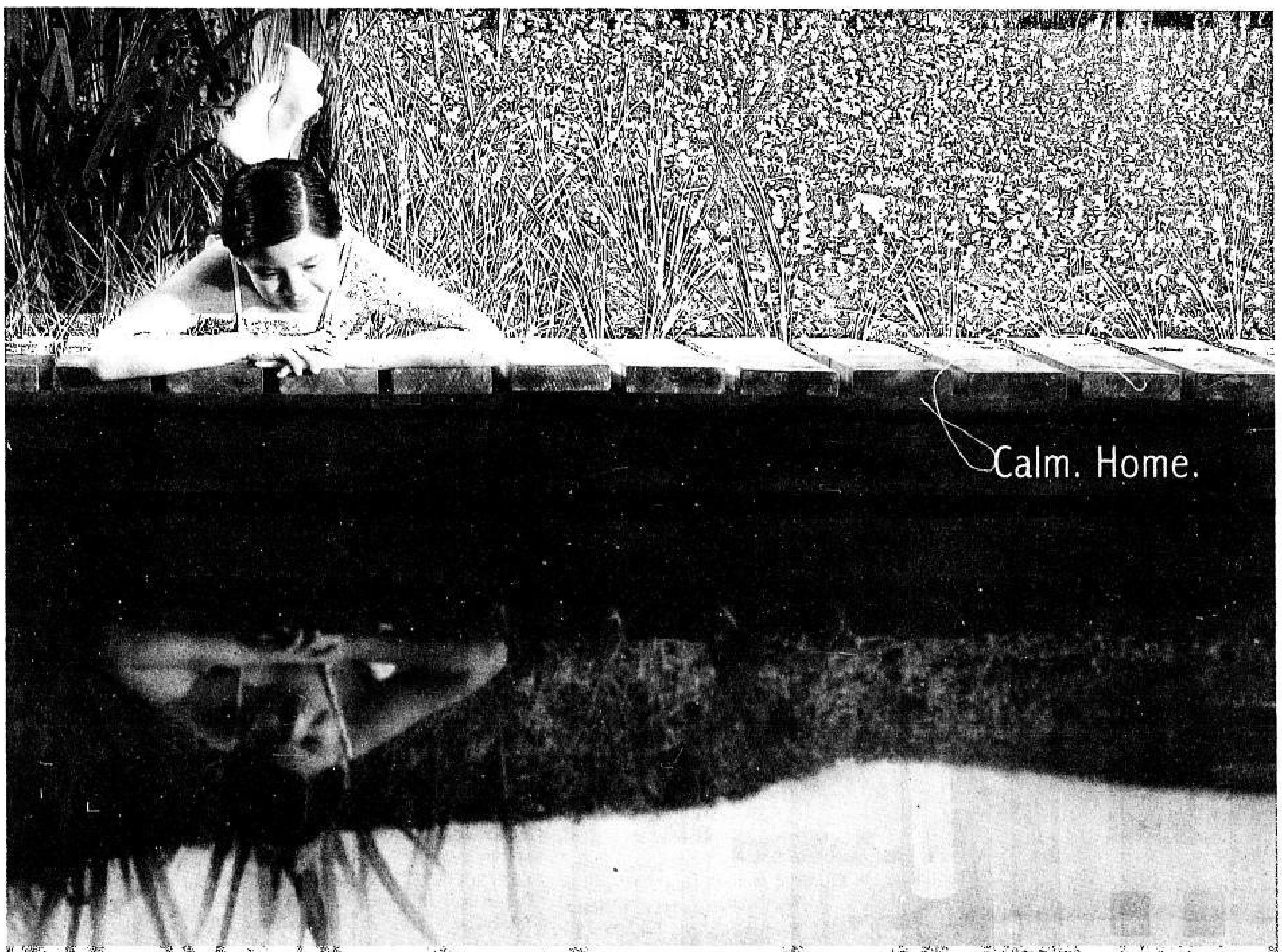

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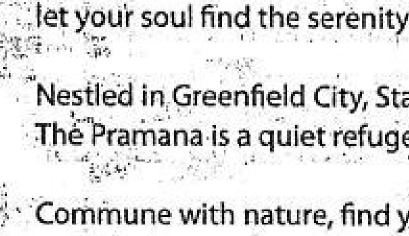

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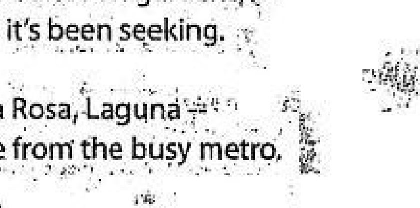

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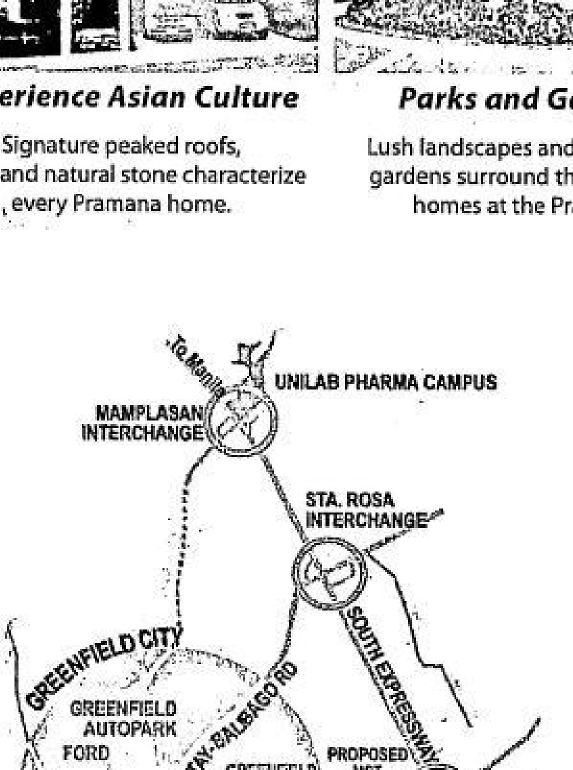

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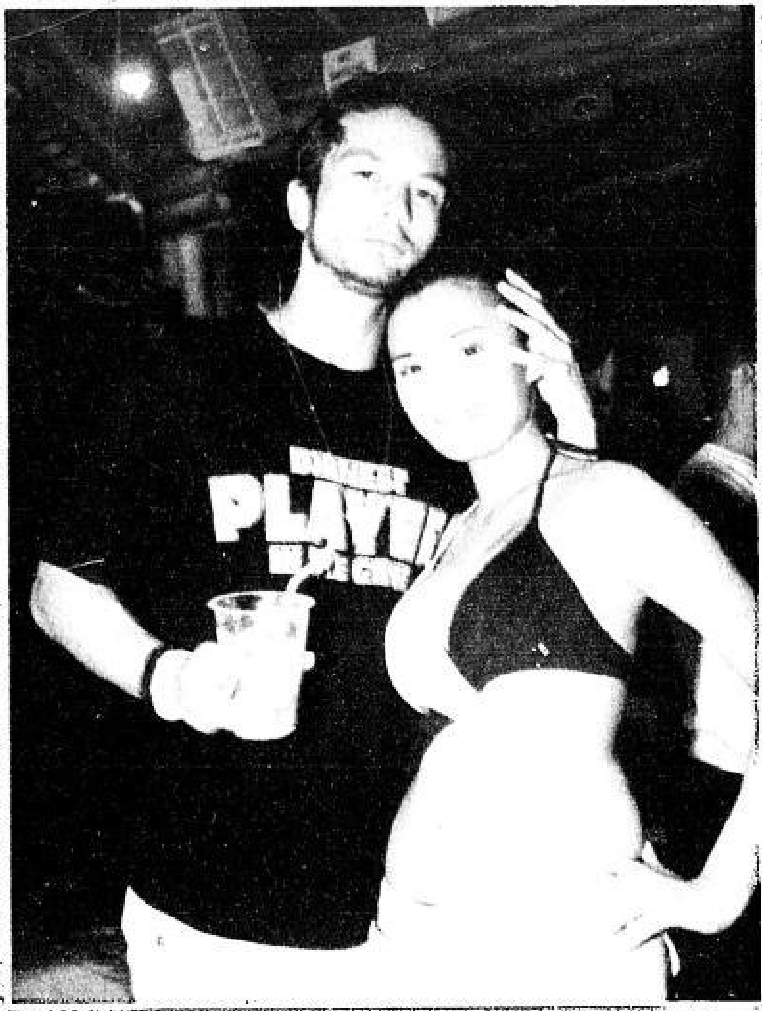


IF YOU'RE rich, I'm Michelle. Rich Herrera and Michelle Madrigal

SUN-DRESSED. Bea Constantino and Osang Yulo

DESIGN FRIENDLY. Rajo Laurel

YO HOHO and a bottle of Bacardi. Ito Zamora

DEEP BLUE SCENE. JM Rodriguez and Jon Herrera

PEEPS From shoreline...

Ulterior motive: Stranded!
Party perpetrator: Smart
Crime scene: Club Paraw & Juice Bar, Boracay
Date of release: November 2–4

To some people, three nights of debauchery at the country's beach capital may seem a tad bit indulgent. But one long weekend last month, Styles Entertainment, together with Smart and Bacardi, cooked up such an event for a select crew of A-list island visitors. With a Smart myTV phone and Bacardi Mojito in hand, they were treated to a sunset session at the Whitehouse beachfront, an exclusive party at Juice Bar, and a Superklasse Saturday at Club Paraw, where DJs Mars and Ace dished out a steady serving of rock, hiphop, and mashups.

BEYOND FIVE THIRSTY. Ramon Roa, Fritz Martinez, Haward Vitas, Tina Vitas, Joann del Prado

HAPPY HOUR HOTTIES. Francesca Zimmer Sookie Chiongbian, Celine Gabriel, Rose Montenegro

A SUPER COCKTAIL. Juana Manahan, Ricky Jupangco, and Brava's Abba Napa

... To city

We're toasting to Brava, a cozy enclave in Serendra that's poised to be the prelude and finale of every nocturnal sojourn in the metro.

Ulterior motive: The grand prelude of Brava
Crime scene: Serendra, Global City
Date of release: December 5

SHAKEN NOT STIRRED. Mika Bautista, Mireille Tolentino

CHAMPAGNE WISHES. Ricky Delgado, Marga Valdes, Paolo la O'

FAMILY RECIPE. John Urrutia, Chicho Suarez

COSMOPOLITAN CLIQUE. Nicole De Castro, Abba Napa, Xeng Zulueta

MANILA'S BEST KEPT SECRETS. Ines Cabarrus and Pepper Teehankee

SOUTHERN COMFORT. Lexi and Javi Berenguer-Testa

TALES from the NU ROCK AWARDS

"PART OF THE MYSTIQUE OF the NU Rock Awards is that it is literally the place to hear new rock. Two acts, Rivermaya and Razorback premiered great new material ... Rivermaya performed "Sugal ng Kapalaran" that's coming up in their new album—and premiered their exciting new lineup. And so did Razorback, who did a song called "Daan-daang Dahilan," which was finished in time for the Rock Awards. It's also from their still untitled concept album about death and rebirth. The album will cover what happens in between." **–Cris Hermosisima, Station Manager, NU 107**

"The Rock Awards are always a blur of activity and stress for me, but doing the National Anthem is probably the most stressful. It seems easy, but when you're in front of thousands of people who (I believe) know it by heart ... the game changes. I just know that everybody is waiting for a screw-up!!! I decided to keep it simple, no flashy licks or anything, no Hendrixisms (save for the feedback) to cover up anything. I hesitated a couple times, but at least I didn't cop out by, covering it up with a flashy fill and drawing people away from the solemnity of something that really is every Filipino's prayer. It's not a 'showcase' piece, and I wanted to give it the proper respect ... especially in light of what happened the day before (The Trillianes incident). I kept in mind what it really is supposed to mean ... and we all tend to take it for granted these days. I was horridly nervous ... my stomach cramped and my back hurt." **–Francis Reyes, Music Director, NU 107**

"In keeping with a year of runaway vocalists, Clem (formerly with Orange & Lemons) made a surprise claim on the 'Album of the Year Award' ... although he did thank his former bandmates in his acceptance speech. I also thought that Bamboo performing 'Tatsulok' with Buklod and Noel Cabangon (who wrote the song) was another great moment. Much missed was Pepe Smith (who missed his flight from Bangkok) and his ideological twin Karl Roy, who is still recuperating in the hospital." **–Isabelle Ramos, NU 107**

"It's a great honor to win at the NU Rock Awards. It's always great to know you're appreciated, especially this year ... (Up yours, Voldemort!)" **–Mark Escueta, Named Drummer of the Year 2007**

"*Wasak na wasak*!" –Ramon Bautista, (who cameo'd with Radioactive Sago Project)

"I don't want to direct any more awards nights ... I was the only sober guy in sight!" **–Quark Henares, who debuted as director for the Rock Awards**

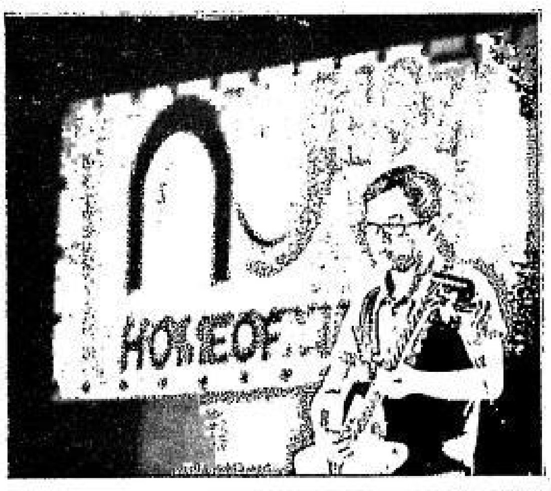
"Victoria London, a PETA advocate, reprimanded Papadom (Tropical Depression) 'coz he paraded a caracal (wild cat from South Africa) on a leash. Papadom proudly answered back, 'I have a license!' I wanted to borrow the cat for my segment—and it's a good thing I still ended up presenting with some rare Brazilian felines ... " **–DJ Pontri, NU 107**

Winners list

best new artist: Hilera
vocalist of the year: Kat Agarrado of Sinosikat?
guitarist of the year: Ira Cruz of Bamboo
bassist of the year: Nathan Azarcon of Bamboo
drummer of the year: Vic Mercado of Bamboo and Mark Escueta of Rivermaya
best live act: Bamboo
in the raw award: Reklamo
song of the year: "Will You Ever Learn" by Typecast
album of the year: "Moonlane Gardens " by Orange & Lemons
artist of the year: Bamboo
best music video: "DVD-x" of Sandwich (Directed by Marie Jamora)
best album packaging: Sarah Gaugler and Clementine for "Moonlane Gardens" of Orange & Lemons
producer of the year: Lourd and Francis de Veyra for "Tangina Mo Ang Daming Nagugutom Sa Mundo Fashionista Ka Pa Rin" of Radioactive Sago Project
listeners choice award: Bamboo
hall of fame: Mike and Angelo Vilegas

(*SINO SI*) kitty Cat?

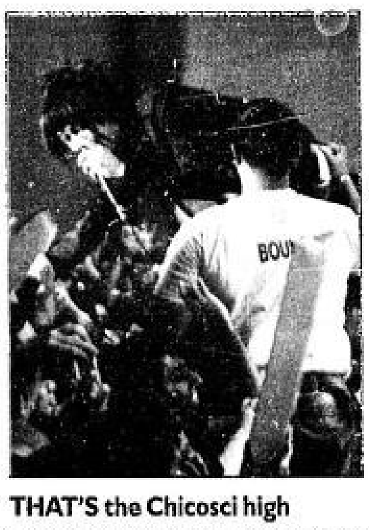
BORGY gives peace a chance



MAGILIW. Francis Brew rocks the national anthem

BIG WINNER of the night Bamboo

*MALIGAYANG PAS-***COUP.** Marc Abaya

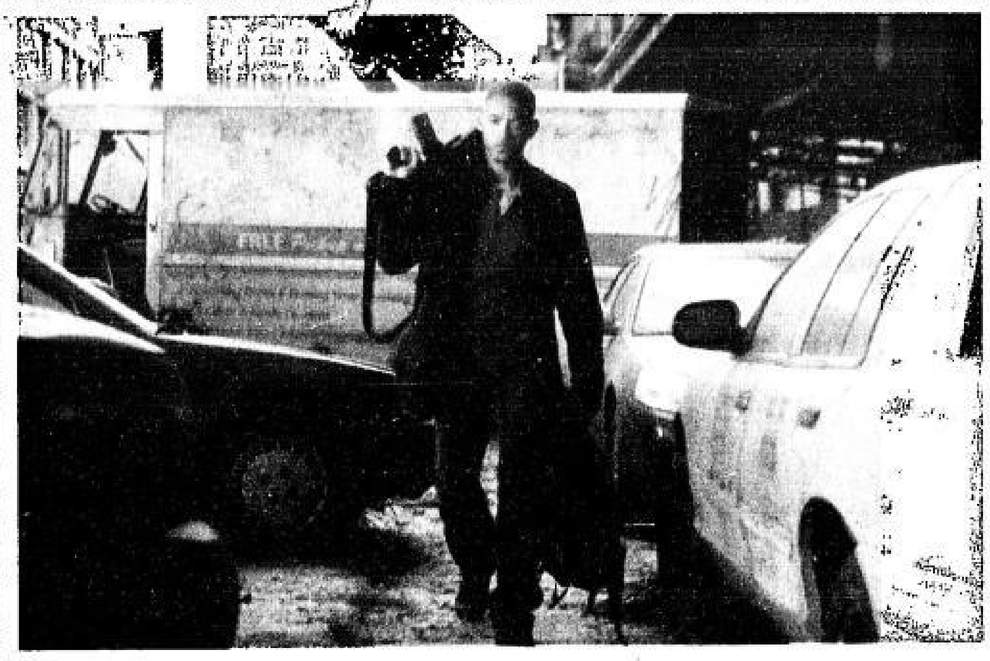


THAT'S the Chicosci high

HOST ELIGIBLE. Zach Lucero and Asia Agcaoili

REMEMBER THE TITANS. Quark and Atom Henares

ITO ANG TAMA! (*Sino si*) Cat Juan, Amanda Lapus, Tals Diaz



SHEER Will power

Will Smith is Legend

From page H1

The explanation the mental deterioration became very clear to me; the idea that they talked about the first thing that goes is appetite. There is no desire to eat. Sex drive goes next. There's a point it starts to become normal.

Was it hard to get into that idea of solitude when everywhere around you is the crew?

New York is probably the individual most difficult city in the world to feel solitude. Even when you don't see any people, even in your room and you're closed up and the shades are closed, there is a hum. There is a buzz, there is electricity, there's the sound of cars, there's a rumble of the amount of movement that's actual on the island at any given time. What we did is we would clear four or five blocks at a time and there are scenes [of me] walking on the street of an empty New York. It's chilling. You realize you never actually seen a shot of New York empty. You may have one image in your mind right now of New York empty and it was Tom Cruise in "Vanilla Sky" but other than that, in the magazines and everything you've seen you always see it packed with people. I feel like opening it up and getting those real practical shots of empty New York. It sets a tone that puts you in some place that you've never been before.

Are you the kind of actor who, when you get into a role you are in that role until the end of shooting or can you turn it off? Was it difficult getting into this character?

There are certain elements that you can turn on and off, for the most part, but characters linger. When you do something everyday, you live in a certain mindset everyday for six months in character, it might be six months before you cleanse yourself totally of that character. I grew up in a house with three brothers and sisters so it was essentially full. This is really the first time in my life that I actually enjoy time by myself. And it's after making "I Am Legend," being forced to be by myself and be alone and not have my family stay in Los Angeles for most of the shooting. It was the most amount of time I ever been by myself. Now, after the movie, it lingers.

Most people opt to want to work with other actors and you go off and do a film where you spend most of the time with a dog. What was that like?

That was one of the major fears that I had going into the film. Will people really want to sit for an hour and watch me with a dog? I have been safely protected throughout my entire career, purposely, with brilliant actors. When you stand next to Tommy Lee Jones, he does a lot of the work! So this was a somewhat scary undertaking. Fortunately, looking at "Castaway" I could see what worked for Tom Hanks. I just can't imagine what Tom Hanks was thinking when he made "Castaway." "Dude, are you crazy? By yourself?" But I'm very proud of how this film turned out.

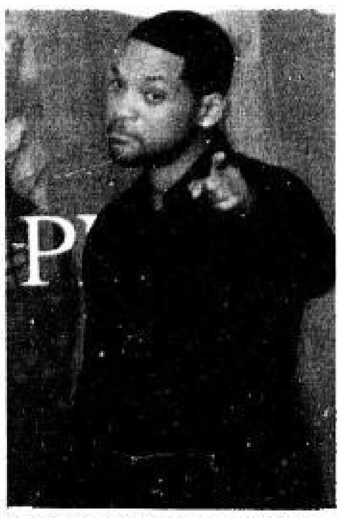
How do you manage to control your career that you are a bankable box office superstar but, at the same time, a serious actor with two Oscar nominations?

I guess the major thing is to not put too much on one piece of art. You just have to know that you are laying one brick today. One day you'll have the Great Wall. It's not today, though, today you'll lay this one perfect brick. And this is the brick of "I Am Legend." People might say, "Oh, you know, it's just a zombie movie" or something like that but it's not standing alone. It's sitting next to "The Pursuit of Happyness." And "The Pursuit of Happyness" is sitting next to "Hitch." You try not to self-destruct based on one reaction to one film, one year. I see people panic and destroy elements of their career because something didn't go the way that they wanted it to go.

What about your music career?

There's a book called "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho. There's a line there, he says, "The whole of the universe is contained in one grain of sand." I took that to mean that you don't have to study everything, you only have to study this one grain of sand and if you master this one grain of sand you will know everything you need to know about the universe. I have chosen stories as my one grain of sand. The study of world story-telling and be able to tell stories in a way that communicates simple human truths and to be able to tell stories in a way that connect to the central core of humanity. So for me, I am avoiding anything that isn't on the path of my one grain of sand.

"DUDE, are you crazy? By yourself?"



"DO I look like I have problems with unwanted attention?"

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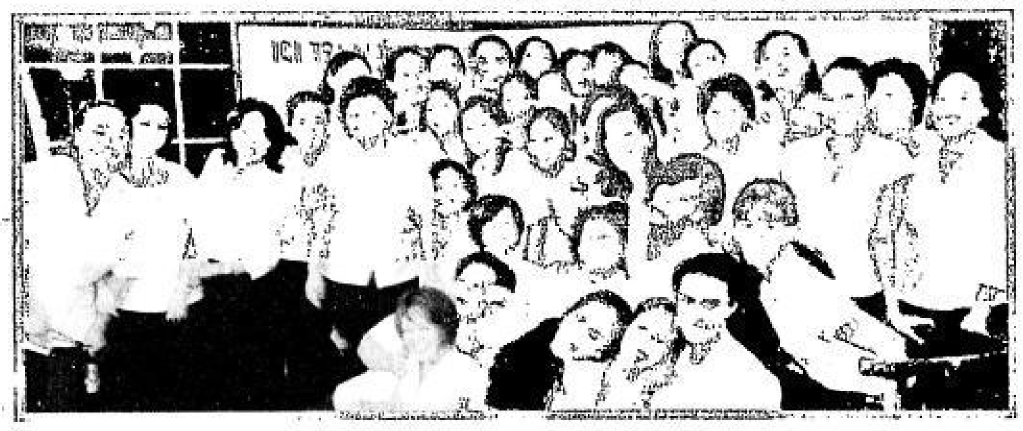
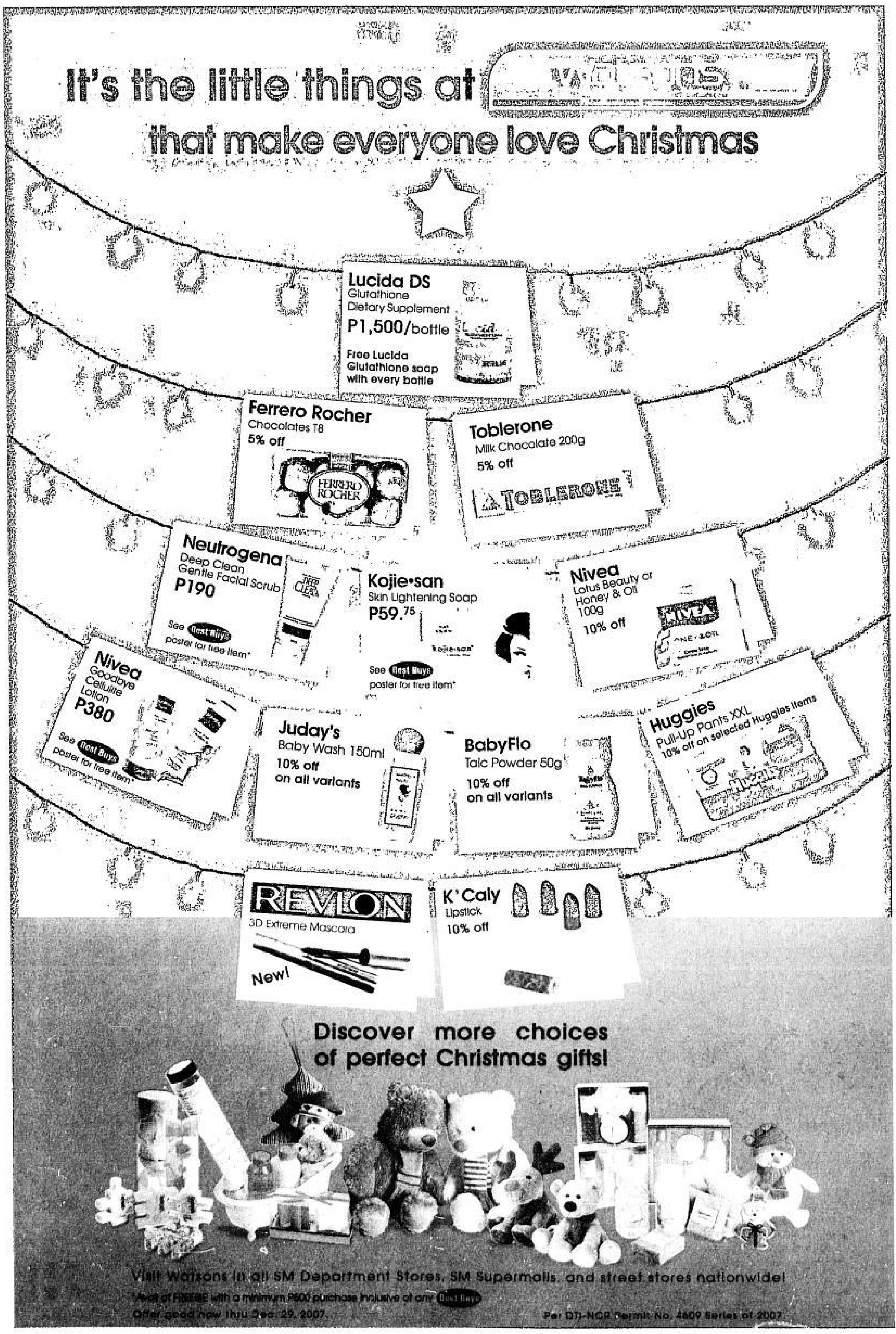


Self-help beauty



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4609 Series of 2007.

Interview by Katrina A. Holigores

BEAUTY IS IN THE eye of the beholder, but for a rising number of women who have experienced abuse, having even a semblance of self-esteem is close to impossible.

Trying to rebuild confidence and even livelihood through beauty is one of the main thrusts of the Isdanco Foundation. Several of their projects have included workshops for battered women, trying to help them in regaining a feeling of both inner and outer beauty. Super talks to Cindy Soriano, marketing head of Isdanco to find out how "vanity" helps.

Why choose beauty as a means to help battered women?

We at the Isdanco Foundation know that beauty does not mean just being sexy, and vice versa. Although we don't deny the fact that people love looking at fabulous bodies and beautiful faces, we recognize that true beauty goes beyond skin deep. It is a feeling of physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Women who are abused are often faced with distressing side effects both physically and emotionally. Their self-confidence and self-esteem can be low during these times. Isdanco Foundation offers the opportunity to reach out to battered women by pampering them. We believe that by helping them look good, they will also feel better about themselves.

What are some of the programs of Isdanco Foundation?

The Center for Aesthetic Studies (CAS) is the primary program instituted by the Isdanco Foundation. It is a Tesda-registered school dedicated to the art and science of Cosmetology. This teaching institution is open to the public as well as to scholars sponsored by various government agencies, socio-civic groups, and private benefactors.

We believe that by helping them look good, they will also feel better about themselves

Similar to Isdanco, the school espouses the importance of quality skills training, proper value formation, and the promotion of national spirit. Its curriculum covers the main areas of Cosmetology: Face, Hair and Body—inclusive of comprehensive classes in make-up, hair artistry, nail care and massage. Its focus is to produce educated, passionate professionals with an intrinsic respect and appreciation for the evolution of our culture. Its methodology includes both theory and practice within environments simulated to match industry settings. CAS' faculty is composed of very capable instructors schooled abroad and also have local experience.

How can outsiders participate? Do they have to join the organization or donate money?

In line with the foundation's commitment to the Filipino, scholarships are available to the student population. The Isdanco Foundation receives support through foundation grants, corporate programs, government funding, and individual donations.

We also encourage individuals, families, businesses, community foundations, service clubs, or other groups to develop a Scholarship Fund in order to help remove financial barriers and enable students to have full access to alternative education that would help improve their lives.

For more information on this foundation contact: Tisha Bautista or Cindy Soriano, at Tel. No. (632) 8970383, Fax No. (632) 8970307 or Email: info@isdanco.org

super

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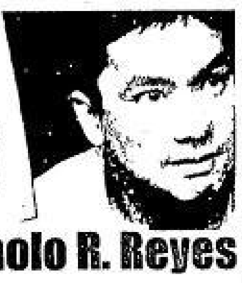
When it comes to the art of gift wrapping, the real question is: How far can a piece of transparent tape take you?

THE PLASTIC snowman

Scotch on the rocks

"Duct tape is like the force. It has a light side, a dark side, and it holds the universe together." –Oprah



LOST IN TRANSIT

Paolo R. Reyes

HOW MANY ROLLS OF scotch tape would it take to wrap a man? Better ask 3M. Or celebrity 3D street artist Mark Jenkins, for that matter.

From the bowels of Rio de Janeiro to the bright streets of Bethlehem, the Washington-based artist has been using the city as a canvass for his installation pieces-transparent street sculptures made entirely of adhesive packing tape.

Jenkins's creatures of tape have been featured in hip French glossies, a local Korean news website (which, strangely enough, even ran a full interview with him), US art blog Wooster Collective,

SCOTCH/12

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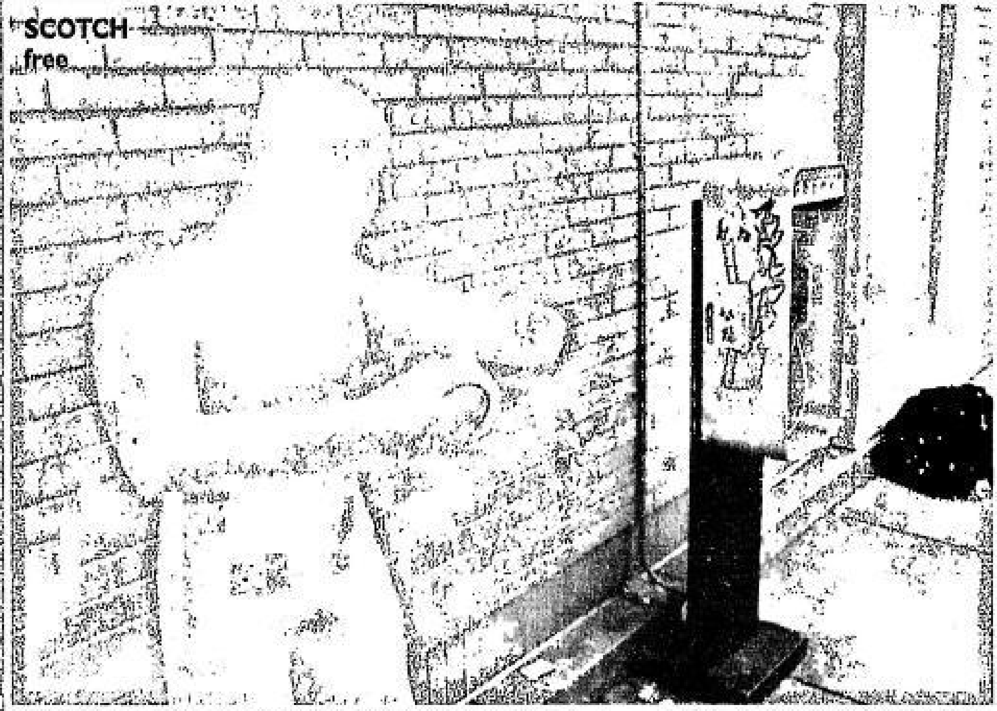
PLAYGROUND

A STICKY situation



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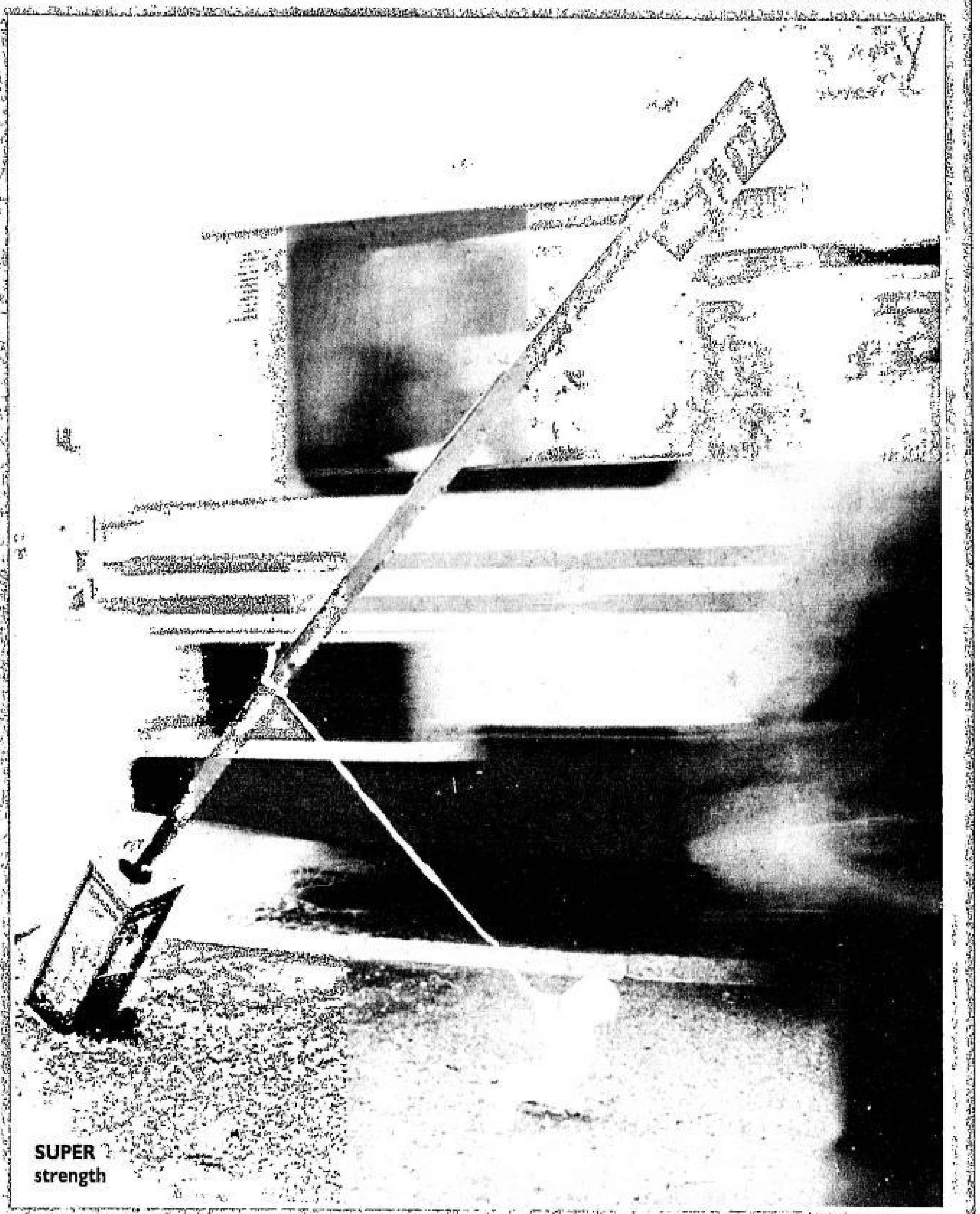
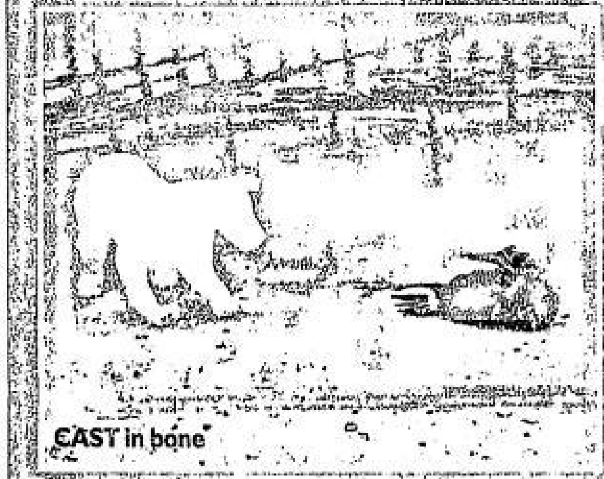
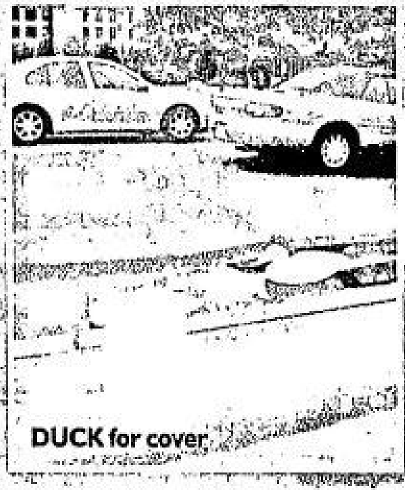


SUPER strength



CAST in bone



DUCK for cover

Scotch on the blocks

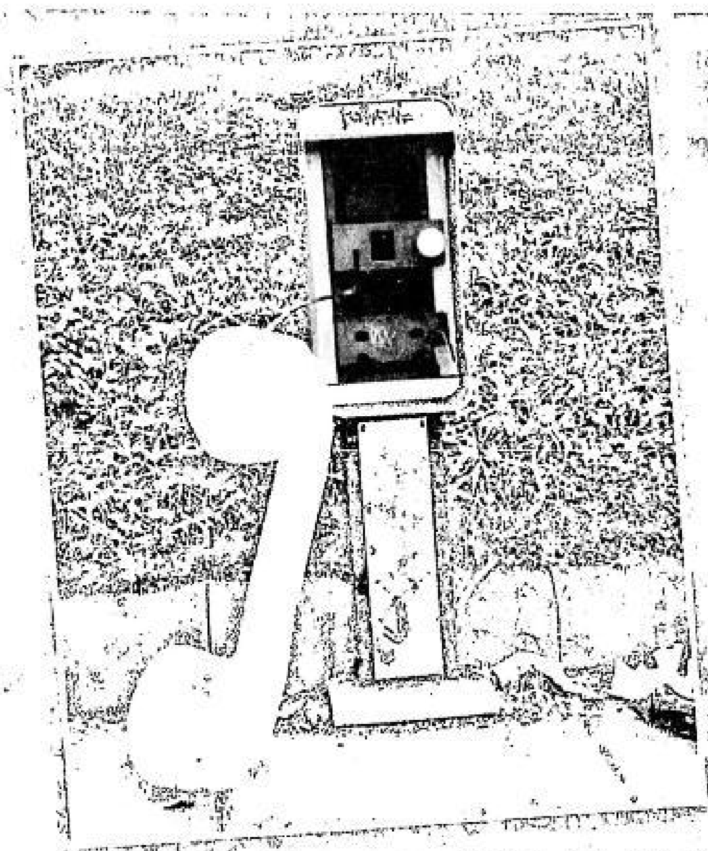
[illegible]

Wrap Star

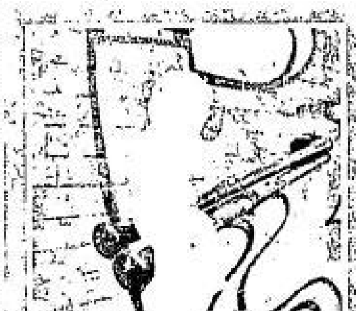
[illegible]

Great Scotch

[illegible]



LOST child [illegible]



[illegible]

[illegible]

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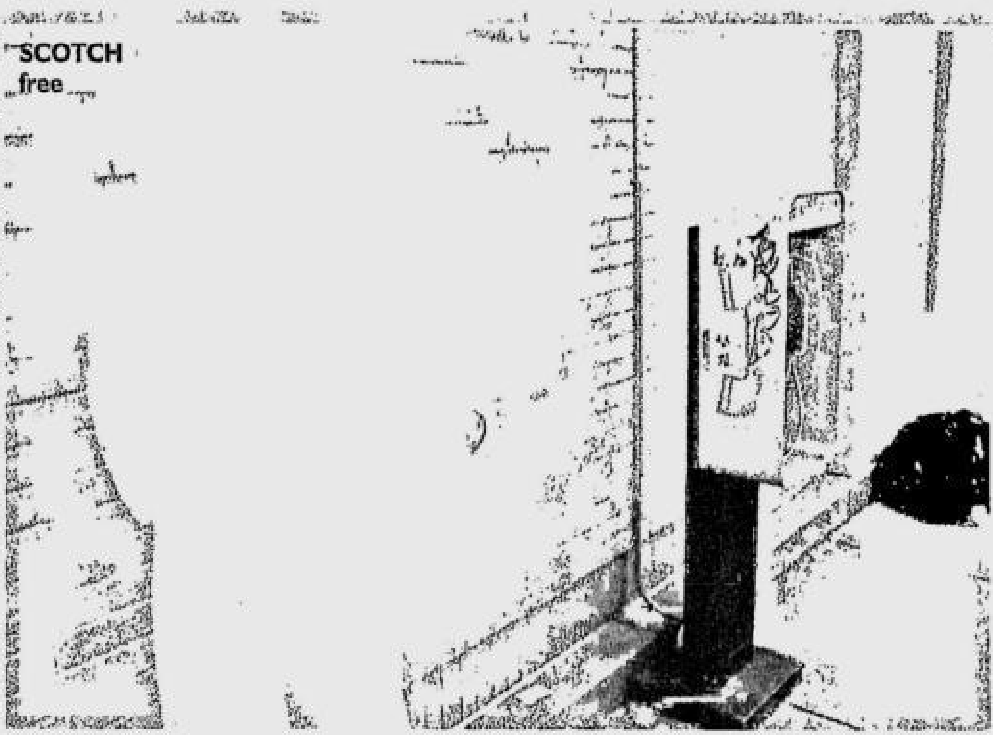
Scotch on the blocks

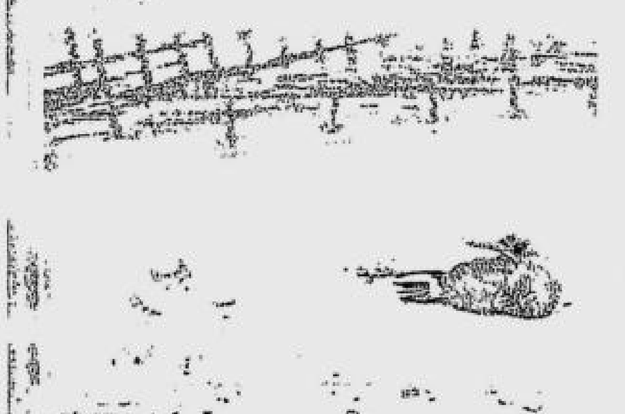
PLAYGROUND

A STICKY situation



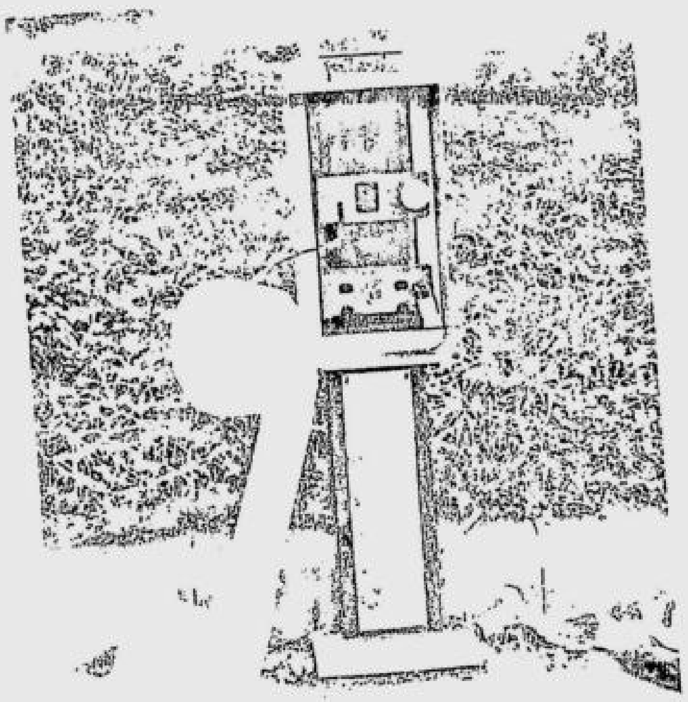
SCOTCH free

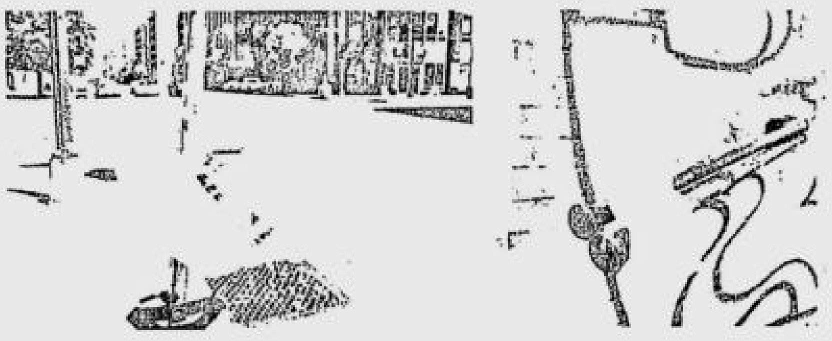
SUPER strength

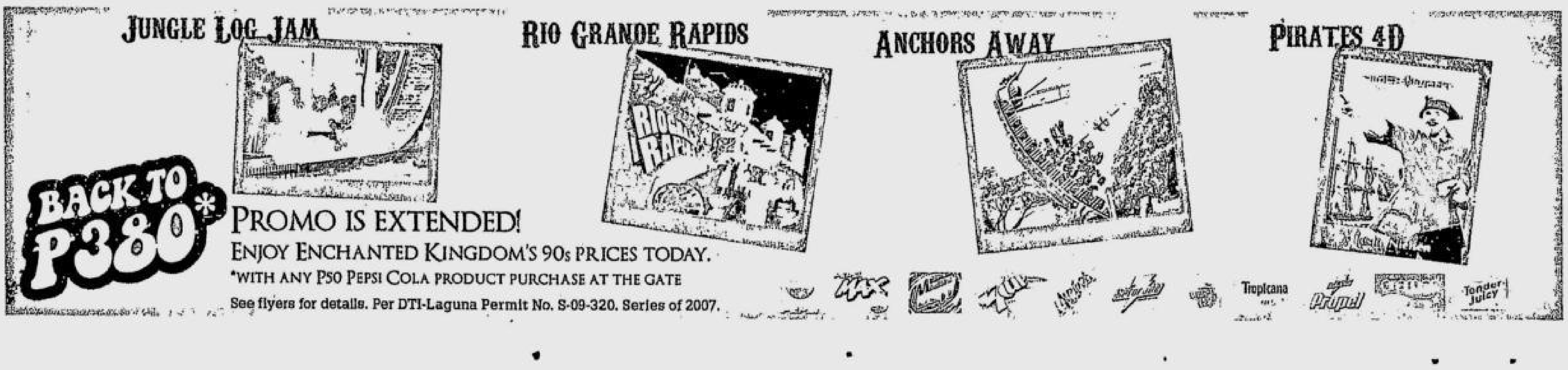


CAST in bone

DUCK for cover



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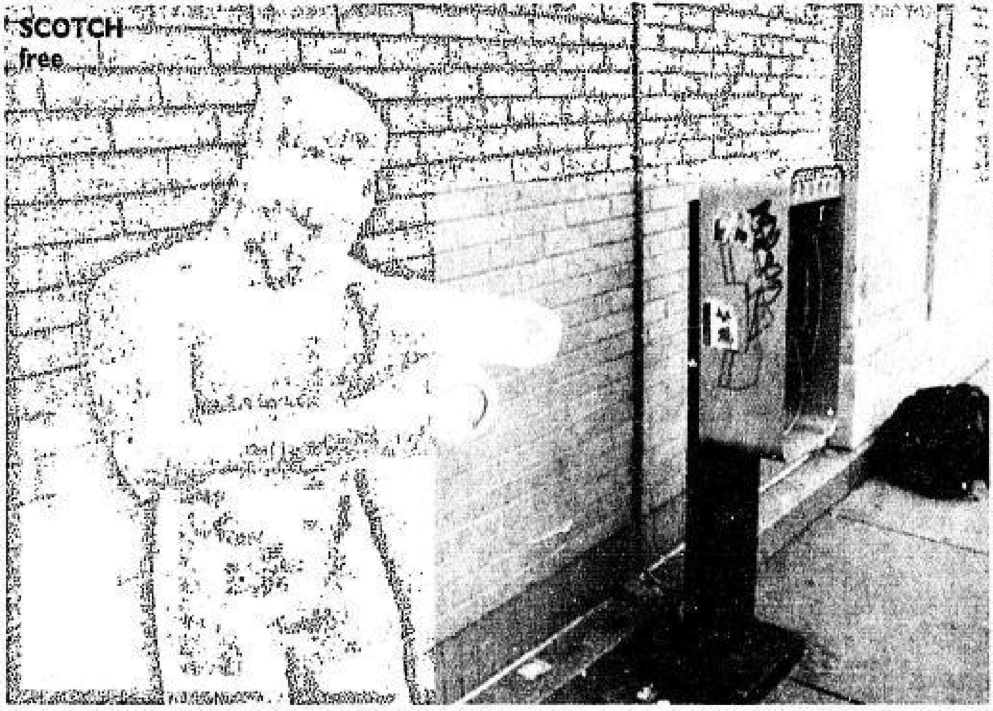
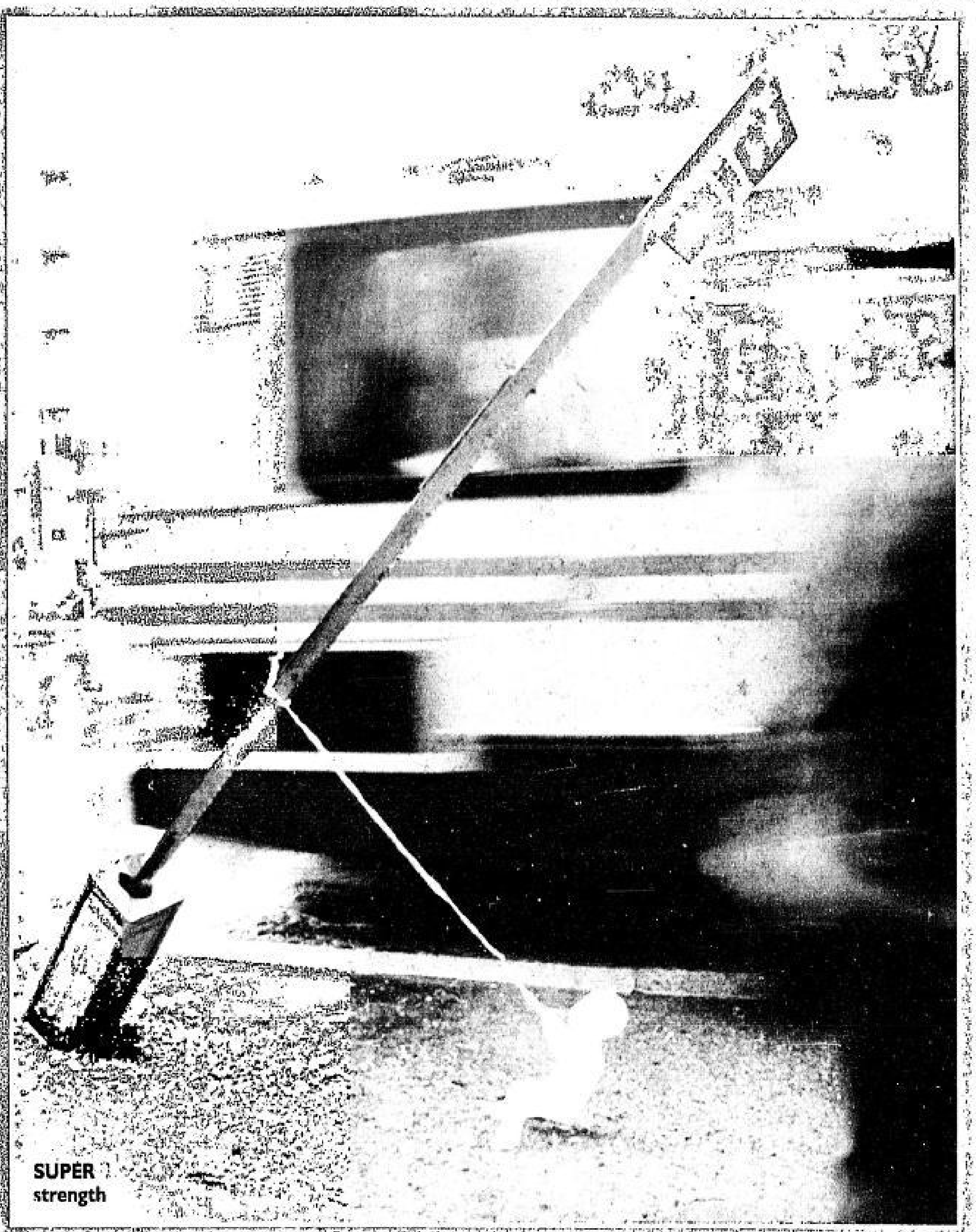
PLAYGROUND

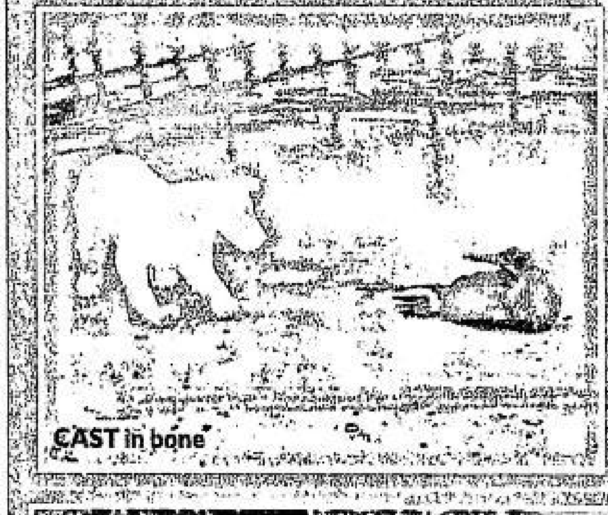
A STICKY situation



SCOTCH free



SUPER strength



CAST in bone

DUCK for cover

TALL order

Scotch on the blocks

[illegible] in a German art book, *Hidden Track: How Visual Culture Is Going Places*.

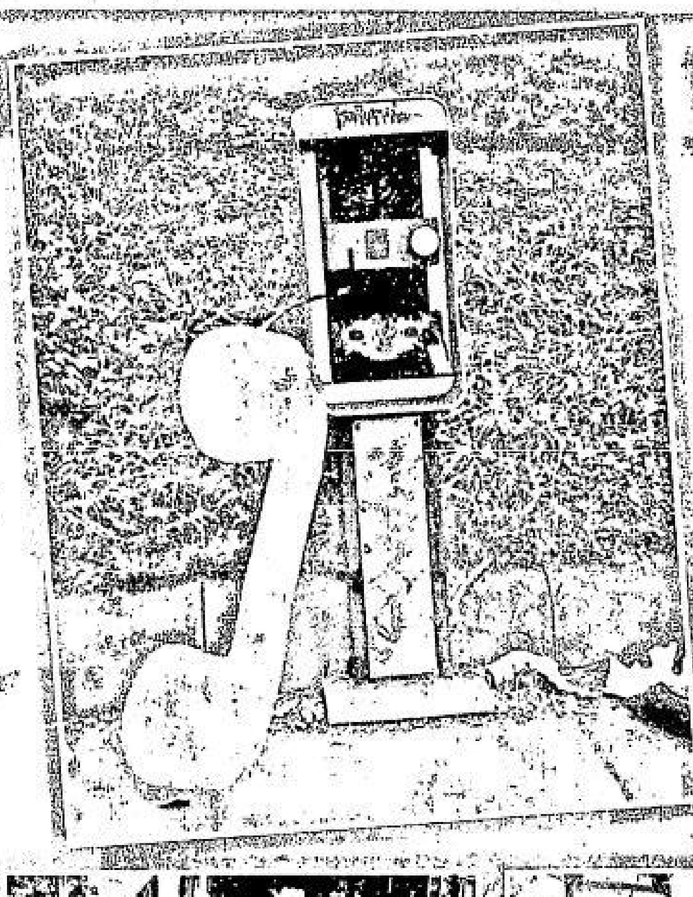
Wrap Star

[illegible]-year-old, scotch tape seems to have taken over Jenkins' life. But his fascination with these famously sticky strips of plastic began in 2003 when the nomadic American found himself teaching English in Brazil.

Bored and a little restless between classes, he decided to make a [illegible] of a football on his desk out of Sellotape. Amused by his creation, he went on to wrap every single object in his apartment—spoons, pails and what not—until there was only one thing left: himself.

[illegible] out to be a bloody recipe for disaster. Jenkins literally mummified himself. The [illegible] proved to be particularly difficult before realizing that his circulation was being cut off in the process of trying himself free [illegible].

Eventually though, he learned to perfect this rather bizarre art form. Since then, he has cast everything from a [illegible] child to a giant toy giraffe, along with over 60 [illegible] [illegible] manage the [illegible] of [illegible] male ducks, horses, dogs [illegible] that could easily fill Noah's Ark.



CALL [illegible]

LOST child in the city

GRAFFITI [illegible]

Great Scotch!

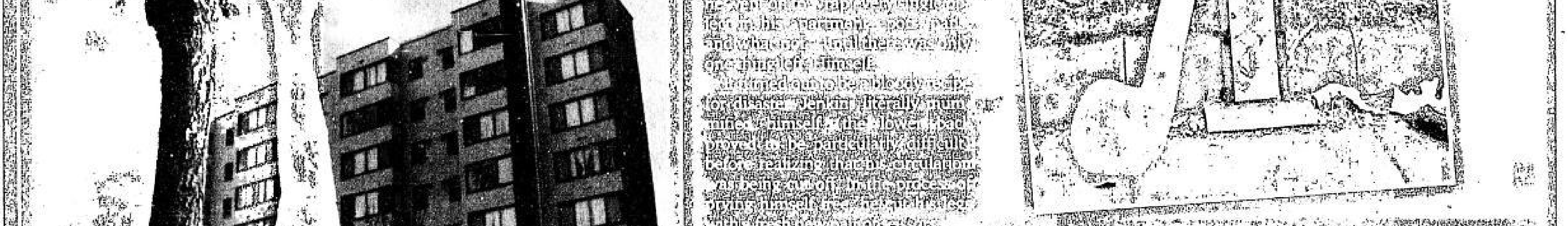
In a [illegible] campaign for the [illegible] people to propagate their [illegible], Jenkins launched the Storker Project in 2005, [illegible] babies, left them in precarious locations, and encouraged random pedestrians to bring them home.

[illegible] his pieces, Jenkins buys [illegible] of Super Strength [illegible] tape from 3M. [illegible] his website (www.markjenkins.com) reveals the simplicity of his process: he wraps an object in saran wrap or cellophane, covers it in transparent tape, cuts a small slit in the back to remove the object, and then covers the hole with more tape.

Like the other eye-catching examples of illegal graffiti, [illegible] seek to engage the passerby with what he affectionately calls "visually compelling litter."

[illegible] staunch environmentalist, [illegible] would like to believe that his sculptures [illegible] plastic litter [illegible]

[illegible] though, the magnificence of the cosmopolitan [illegible] The Washington Post in 2006, [illegible] my mind is always [illegible] like a Rubik's cube.



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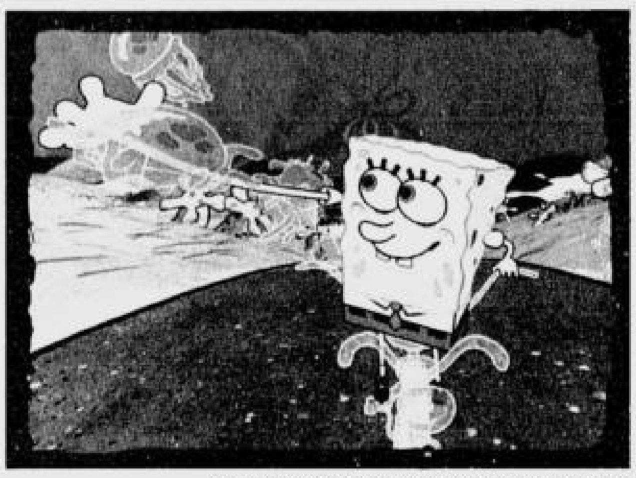

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MEET-AND-GREET SANTA CLAUS AT HIS **ENCHANTED EMPORIUM** FROM DECEMBER 22 TO 30 AT BROOKLYN PLACE. MARVEL AT THE RETURN OF MASTER MAGICIAN LOU HILARIO AT 7PM ON DECEMBER 28, 29, AND 30 BY THE BANDSTAND.

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For further inquiries, call 830-2111 to 16 or log on to www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph. Enchanted Kingdom is located in San Lorenzo South, Santa Rosa City, Laguna. Shuttle service to Enchanted Kingdom is available at the parking area of Glorietta restaurant row (across Goldcrest), Makati City. Contact ITEX at 811-4839 for more details.

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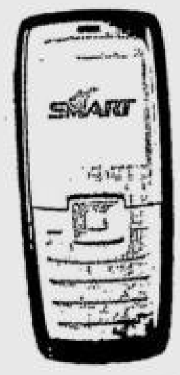

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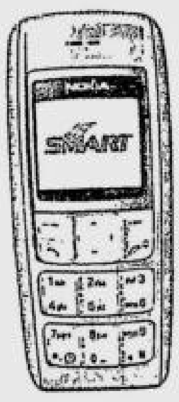

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Choice cuts from new albums highlight pop music's sampling trend

GERONIMO AND ROSALES. Sing a duet on "Pangarap na Bituin" soundtrack.

By Rito P. Asilo

IN A NUMBER OF SLEEKLY produced and highly infectious singles from local and foreign recording artists, pop music's new sound doesn't sound so new, after all. With the sampling trend ruling popmeisters' tastes and preferences, the groove may be catchy and ear-friendly, but the melodic riffs and licks aren't so original.

In Craig David's fourth studio album, "Trust Me," he attempts to duplicate his previous chart-topping triumphs ("Rewind," "Fill Me In," "Seven Days") with the inclusion of "Hot Stuff," which heavily samples David Bowie's glam-rock classic, "Let's Dance." For a more original sound, however, groove to the swaying rhythm of "Just A Reminder."

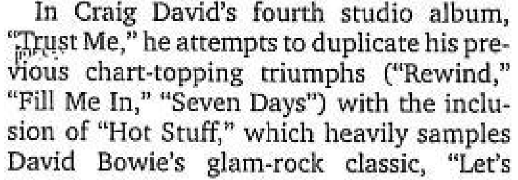
Welcome surprises

A number of familiar songs also get a reworking in the "original" soundtrack of the ABS-CBN *teleserye*, "Pangarap Na Bituin," which features welcome surprises: Not only does Sarah Geronimo remake the Willy Cruz classic, "Pangarap Na Bituin," she also reworks recent radio hits like Bituin Escalante's "Kung Ako Na Lang Sana" and Regine Velasquez's "Pangarap Ko Ang Ibigin Ka," a vocally accomplished version that lacks the emotional kick of the original.

A noteworthy inclusion in the album is the simple but charming guitar-driven track, "'Di Ka Mawawala sa Puso Ko," in which Jericho Rosales—who acquits himself well, musically—joins Sarah halfway through the love song.

In another much-talked-about comeback bid, the Spice Girls, who disbanded in 1998, have also released new singles *via* a "Greatest Hits" album, to accompany their sold-out reunion tour: The feel-good ballad, "Headlines (Friendship Never Ends)," is supposed to flaunt the girls' perceived vocal maturity—even Posh Spice Victoria sings a couple of lines!

Unfortunately, the song doesn't really prove much. While the girls have always been savvy performers, their pipes are a different story—they were (and still are) lots of fun, but they were never powerful singers to begin with!



THE SPICE GIRLS. Return with two new songs and a sold-out concert.

Raw energy

Their second single, "Voodoo," is a more successful endeavor, whose raw energy and with-it '90s vibe are reminiscent of the woman-power mantra and infectious grooves of their pop hits like "Wannabe," "Stop" and "Say You'll Be Mine."

Geri Halliwell, who was the first to leave the group in the late '90s, says of the reunion: "For us, it's about celebrating the

CHOICE/ J2

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Lights come back on *Broadway*

NEW YORK—BROADWAY WAS back. Crowds lined up for tickets and actors and crews converged on once-darkened theaters as dozens of shows came alive again after a 19-day stagehands' strike.

"I'm thrilled! For everyone," Liz Enright exclaimed, walking away with two half-price tickets to "Legally Blonde," one of more than two dozen plays and musicals that were shut down during the strike. "Broadway is exciting. It's New York, and it's alive," she added, as other fans milled around the TKTS discount ticket booth near Times Square, which also reopened recently.

Elation

Enright summed up the elation that filled Broadway after stagehands and theater producers reached a tentative agreement, ending a strike that officials estimate cost the city $2 million a day.

"There's a lot of energy. I feel it coming off of Broadway, and coming in! I want to go back to work," agreed Vincent Pastore, known for playing Salvatore "Big Pussy" Bonpensiero on HBO's mob show, "The Sopranos," who was making his Broadway debut in "Chicago" at the Ambassador Theatre.

Promotional tickets

"Chicago" held a last-minute afternoon rehearsal to work out kinks before going back on with a new cast that also included "Sopranos" actress, Aida Turturro. Outside, theatre-goers lined up in front of the Ambassador, where promotional tickets for "Chicago" were going for a steeply discounted $26.50. The show quickly sold out, and the offer was extended to the following day's matinee.

TURTURRO. Appears in stage version of "Chicago."

British tourist Steven Haywood had flown to New York with his wife, Claire, to celebrate their 20th anniversary, unaware of the strike. But, after the strike ended, the couple raked up tickets with glee—for "Chicago," "Hairspray" and other shows. "This is Broadway!," he mused. "It's part of New York's razzmatazz!"

Most shows that closed during the walkout were up and running, too, even if cast and crew were a little rusty after nearly three weeks of layoff. Michael Van Praagh, a stagehand for 34 years, was returning to work on Tom Stoppard's "Rock 'n' Roll." He said the settlement was a sign "that we're finally getting the respect we deserve on Broadway."

Strike

Actor Jeff Perry was also relieved the strike was over. He would finally appear in "August: Osage County," the critically-acclaimed Tracy Letts play that was to have opened on Nov. 20.

Perry said the walkout allowed him to spend a lot of "hand-holding" time with family and friends over Thanksgiving. But, he added, "There was that dead, pit-of-your-stomach feeling of, 'Don't tell me this play will never be seen by a wider audience!'" *AP*

BOOB-TUBE BOOBOOS

Time in memorial, need to peace and make up and other boob-tube booboos

By Nestor U. Torre

HOST: MANY PEOPLE FEEL very stressed these days. How do you unwind after a hard day's work?

Guest: After working hard all day, I like to hold my heels in a bar.

(Hold your heels? That's quite a trick!)

***

Host: What is this new medicine good for?

Guest: It's very good to minimize pain if you suffer from arthritis, rheumatism and goat.

(Of course, you must mean—gout!)

***

Host: *Saan nag-umpisa ang sunog?*

Field Reporter: Source *ng sunog* is probably *dito sa tabi ng* dining.

(Ano daw?)

***

Host: How can we stop corruption?

Guest: We cannot stop it, we can only control it. Corruption has been a part of life in this country since time in memorial!

(Uh, that's "immemorial," sir.)

***

Host: Tell us more about your organization's conference.

Guest: We are now holding our annual meeting, which is held every three years.

(Annual? Every three years? Make up your mind—please.)

***

Host: What do you expect will happen on the political scene before the 2010 elections?

Guest: We expect that there will be some political parties that will cowlis.

(Cowlis? —Oh, coalesce!)

***

Host: Who are the other stars in your new movie?

Guest: One of them is Juday Santamaria.

(One fan's Jodi is another fan's Juday!)

***

Host: Do you accept all orders?

Guets: Yes, our company has become big enough that we accept even bulky orders.

(Bulky orders? —Oh, orders in bulk.)

***

Host: How determined are you to win the race?

Guest: All the way—*lalaban ako kahit na masakit ako!*

(*Masakit? May sakit?* Ouch.)

***

Host: What is your message to our viewers before Christmas?

Guest: Most important of all, we all need to peace and make up!

(Ah, so . . .)

***

Host: How are you decorating your restaurant in time for the holidays?

Guest: We will have a big Christmas tree, lanterns, and also all those of lights!

(No comment.)

***

Host: How old are you now?

Guest: Age? Next year, fortified *na ako*

(Fortified? —Oh, you mean, 45!)

***

Host: Tell us about your food festival for the month?

Guest: It's international in nature, for the enjoyment of all of our habituous.

(You say habituous, we say 'habitues!)

***

Host: What is your prediction of how the country will be next year?

Guest: Oh, it's too early—*hindi pa natin masasabi kung* what's in the store for us!

(*Ay*, what's in the store for us!)

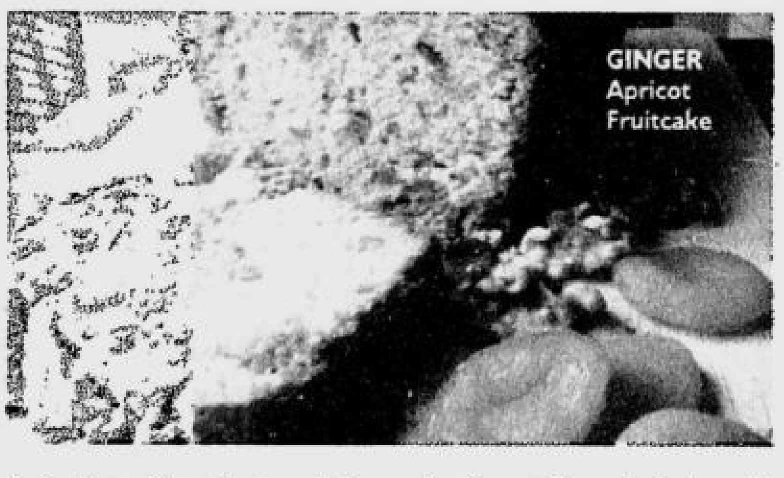
Fruitcake lady thrives in her new advocacy

By Mona Sabalones-Gonzales

JU.D STARTED OUT BAKING A fruitcake that eventually gained the favor of celebrities, politicians, socialites and leading business corporations. Her fruitcake made her a television celebrity, and led to the publication of two vegetarian cookbooks. Later, she won two National Food Quality awards because of it.

LAO. Volunteers as a vegetarian culinary teacher for the elderly.

Ju.D has been making her fruitcake for some 30 years, but what kept her busy this year has been her volunteer work as a vegetarian culinary teacher for the elderly at the Tzuchi Foundation's Sta. Mesa campus in Manila. "I also teach them about computers," she adds in her characteristic jolly demeanor.



Innovative

Her new endeavor, however, hasn't stopped her from being innovative where her fruitcake is concerned: She has four new innovations—namely, the Ginger Cranberry fruitcake, flavored with candied cranberry and liquor; the Ginger Apricot fruitcake, with walnuts and Ilocos *basi*; the Ginger Cranberry cookies, and the Ginger and Apricot cookies, which are perfect for vegetarians.

This year's reinvention—the All-New Ju.D Gold—contains wild honey and rhum. (Call 633-0260 or 633-1188). Ju.D's fruitcakes have truly made their mark!

The Indians like these fruitcakes with tea, while Rosemarie Gil accompanies them with Black Russian. The classic fruitcake, however, is perfect with coffee. And the ginger cookies are preferred by people with Middle Eastern taste.

For the country's fruitcake lady, not everything is about celebrity—which explains her advocacy with the TzuChi Foundation. After all, life is not forever!

Winning through determination

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

WE WAKE UP DAILY TO BAD news, which sometimes make us wonder what our country is coming to. So, it's always good to hear about the achievements of some of our countrymen who quietly go about their tasks even without the fanfare—like our athletes.

Many of them lack funding and proper facilities, yet they persevere and win. Sheer determination always leads to victory!

Athletes

Recently, the Ninth Wushu World Championships in Beijing awarded the coveted gold medal to our very own Willy Wang. Last month, our athletes bagged 14 medals—seven golds, four silvers and three bronzes—at the First Anhui Huangshan Traditional Wushu and Wushu Taolu Invitational in Anhui province, China.

The winning Filipino athletes included Daniel Parantac (one gold in tai chi), Evangeline Agbay (one silver, Nang Gun), Jaclyn Sachi Tamayo (two golds and one bronze, fifth place overall, tai chi), Jadava Bismark (three silvers, eighth place overall, tai chi), Janice Hung (one gold, tai chi), Pedro Quina (one gold, Nan Gun), Stephanie Agbay (one bronze, tai chi) and Vasudev Bismark (two golds, one bronze, tai chi).

The event's organizers treated the athletes to a sightseeing tour of the famous Yellow Mountains. When our athletes learned that the Third Yiping Huangshan Cup International Mountaineering Festival and the 2007 All-China Mass Mountaineering Fitness Rally were being held on the same day as the tour, they decided to join the competition—just for fun! More than 600 athletes from over 20 countries participated.

Race

To the Philippine team's delight, they not only conquered the great mountain, they also won the race! Daniel Parantac and Jaclyn Sachi Tamayo, both from Baguio City, placed first in the men's and women's categories, respectively, while Pedro Quina and Evangeline Agbay placed second!

We have God-given talent and unlimited potential to achieve our goals. But, we need determination to develop them. Whatever the odds, we should strive to do better each day. Whether we're competing to bring honor to our country, or merely serving the Lord in our humble way, let's always do our best!

'H.O.P.E.' compiles inspirational songs for cancer patients

By Remy M. Umerez

IT IS SAID THAT MUSIC soothes the mind, body and heart. The maxim has prompted the Pinky Cares Foundation, an organization established by cancer survivor, chemist Pinky Tobiano, for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, to produce the album, "H.O.P. E. (Healing of Pain and Enlightenment)."

Here is Tobiano's story: In May 1994, during a Tokyo Bay cruise, Pinky met new friends, among them Dr. Jatin Shah, a noted specialist from New York's Sloan-Kettering Hospital. For the past nine years, she has been sending the physician a card every Christmas.

Former student

In 2003, Tobiano slipped on the stairs of her house and hit her head. She was rushed to the hospital, where a subsequent diagnostic scan revealed two cancerous lumps.

The physician who saw Pinky, Cardinal Santos Hospital's Dr. Sammy Ang, a throat and laryngeal cancer specialist, turned out to be a former student of Dr. Shah! Then, Pinky faxed the doctor from New York and wrote: "You once told me to call you, in case I needed help."

Dr. Shah did remember—and flew to Manila to operate on Pinky! The operation at St. Luke's was successful, and Pinky's physician friend told her: "I have taken it all out—the cancer is gone!"

When Tobiano asked for the bill, Dr. Shah told her, "You have long paid me in full for my services. The nine years you sent me Christmas cards without fail are more than enough!" Pinky has just mailed her latest Christmas card to Dr. Shah.

Inspiring tunes

"H.O.P. E." boasts of inspiring songs from Jose Mari Chan ("Empty Space," "No Rewind, No Replay"), Gary Valenciano ("Lift Up Your Hands," "Here I Am"), The Company ("Something Good," "Time & Love"), Fatima Soriano ("My Offering"), Jamie Rivera ("Will of the Wind," "In My Life"), Charisse Pempengco ("Smile"), Carissa Cruz-Evangelista and Jasper Manalo ("Umagang Kay Ganda"), Toni Gonzaga ("Count On Me"), Jon Joven ("You Light Up My Life") and Pianne Tobiano-Sinfuego ("Prelude in C Major from Well Tempered Clavier").

Choice cuts from new albums ...

From page L1

past, enjoying one another's company—and our fans! The time is right."

The girls' reunion was so well received in England that ticket sales for the first London date of "The Return of the Spice Girls" World Tour sold out—in just 38 seconds! And reception in the US is just as enthusiastic!

On the soundtrack of Disney's recent fairy tale, "Enchanted," listeners are treated to Alan Menken's lovely tunes—featuring Amy Adams' version of "True Love's Kiss" and James Marsden's impressive, comic rendering of "That's Amore." (Marsden—who should do more film and stage musicals—also wins major music points in the soundtrack of Adam Shankman's "Hairspray.") Another vocal treat is delivered by John McLaughlin, who sings the movie's bittersweet love theme, "So Close."

MARSDEN. Should do more film and stage musicals.

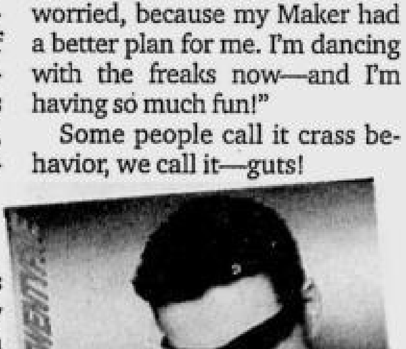
Controversial

Another must-have album is George Michael's "Twenty Five," the controversial British singer's fourth greatest-hits compilation—which debuted at No. 1 in the UK—to celebrate his 25th year in the business.

It includes "An Easier Affair," a curious track whose dance licks are as catchy as its theme, in which the singer displays an obstinate demeanor and self-deprecating humor, as he pokes fun at his sexual orientation, well-publicized indiscretions, and at having been "outed."

Michael sings, "Here is one for the ladies, for the ones who love me. I thought I could be some kind of family man. I told myself I was straight, but I shouldn't have worried, because my Maker had a better plan for me. I'm dancing with the freaks now—and I'm having so much fun!"

Some people call it crass behavior, we call it—guts!


MICHAEL. Obstinate demeanor and self-deprecating humor.

Off-center perspective at Kontra-Agos film fest

By Noelani Torre

DEL MUNDO. Has directed a new full-length feature, "EheM!Plo."

WITH THE MAINSTREAM Metro Manila Film Festival coming up later this month—an event that, you have to admit, not everyone's excited about—last week's Kontra-Agos film festival presented a more off-center perspective about different issues.

"Kontra-Agos: A Resistance Film Festival," which was held from Dec. 5 to 11 at Robinsons Galleria's Indie Sine, featured movies that deal with subjects not often tackled in mainstream cinema, in ways that are often as unconventional as their subject matter.

Intimate look

The festival kicked off with the screening of "Walai," a documentary by Adjani Guerrero-Arumpac. The deeply moving film presents an intimate look into the intertwined experiences of four Muslim women who, at one point or another, spent a portion of their lives in Cotabato City's White House—the seat of a once rich and powerful royal family, whose fortunes have waned as the paint on their mansion has peeled and faded. The house is closely linked to pivotal events that define the lives of these women and their families.

Documentary

At once both poetic and clear-eyed, "Walai" is that rare documentary that gets into the heart and soul of its subject without losing its acuity. Arumpac clearly cares a great deal about the subject of her interviews, but even as her camera lingers on the wrinkled hands of an old mother whose children have died one by one, she also gets wry shots of a young girl clowning at the camera and an old man still living in the memories of a past that has long gone.

"Walai" proceeds at an appropriately slow, lingering pace. It feels inchoate and unstructured at first, but you realize, as the film draws to an end, how carefully everything has been set out and layered.

Kontra-Agos was the brainchild of filmmakers, Kiri Dalena and Sunshine Matutina.

Category

Aside from "Walai," other full-length features included were Waise Azimi's "Standing Up"; JP Carpio's "Hilo"; Clodualdo del Mundo Jr's "EheM!Plo"; Teng Mangansakan's "The Jihadist", and John Torres' "Voice, Tilted Screens and Extended Scenes of Loneliness: Filipinos in High Definition."

ManoMano sale...

From page J4

MADELA. Releases Christmas album.

Filipino pride during the holidays through Yahoo! Answers—an online community where people ask and answer questions in order to gain knowledge. This season, Patrick Joson elicits insights on how Filipinos can inspire the world to rediscover the true meaning of Christmas.

Extended edition

Grab a copy of "High School Musical 2: Extended Edition" on DVD and VCD. The hit production starring Zac Effron and Vanessa Hudgens now comes with a bonus scene, sing along, rehearsal shots, a blooper reel, and several music videos.

Real Living

Real Living magazine is giving away almost P100,000 worth of items to a lucky reader. Check out the magazine's December issue for details. The issue also features kitchen guide and delicious Christmas dishes.

'Rescuing Youssif'

At 2 p.m. and 11 p.m. today, CNN screens "Rescuing Youssif," a gripping account of the journey to recovery of a young Iraqi boy after a horrific attack that left him with terrible burns to the face and hands. Repeat telecast tomorrow at 2 p.m.

Movies on MGM Channel Prime-time

Tonight at 9 p.m., "Bull Durham." Tomorrow, "The Thomas Crown Affair." Dec. 17, "Untamed Heart." Dec. 18, "Death Wish 2." Dec. 19, "A Prayer for the Dying." Dec. 20, "Maxie." 21, "Mr. Mom." Dec. 22, "Tom Sawyer."

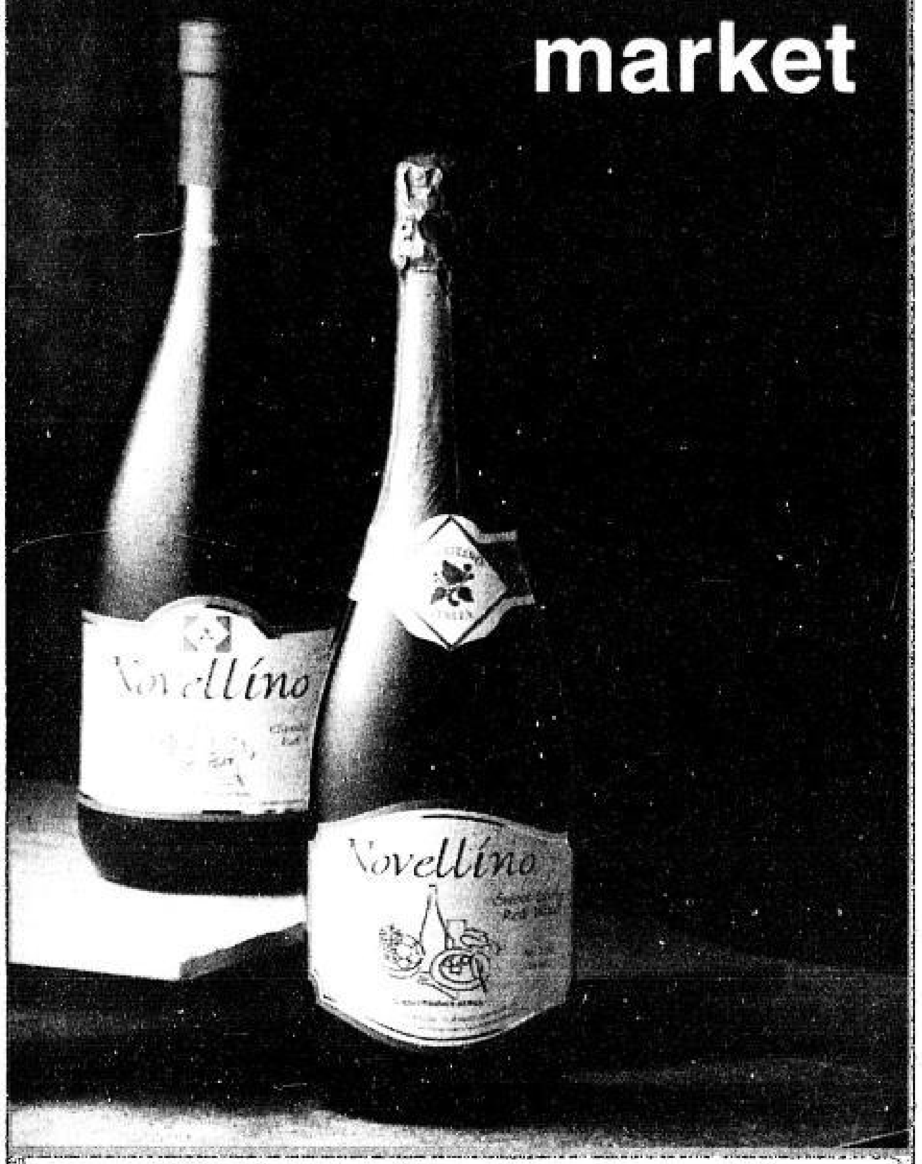
'Ang Lalake sa Parola'

Now on video, "Ang Lalake sa Parola" focuses on one man's struggle to discover his true self. In the midst of a conservative rural community, he must choose between going straight and coming out—and discovers that truth is indeed stranger than fiction.

'Saving Planet Earth'

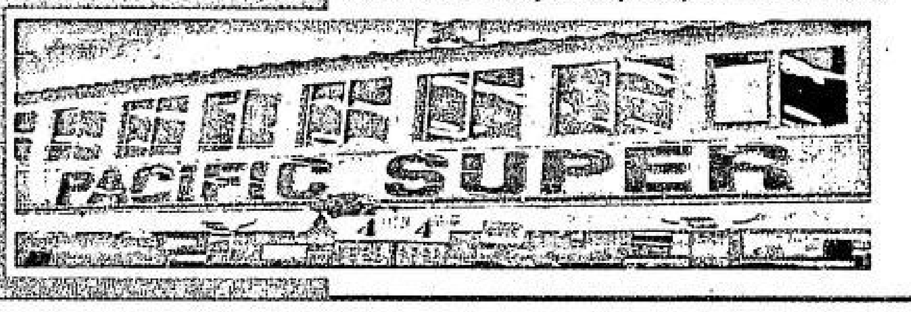
At 7 p.m. tomorrow, CNN telecasts "CNN Future Summit: Saving Planet Earth," which tackles the effects of climate change and what can be done to mitigate it. Richard Quest moderates a panel made up of the President of Iceland, Olafus Grimsson, Bertrand Piccard, Sunita Narain, Bjorn Lomborg and Barrie Pittock.

Novellino sets its sights on international market



SPECIAL!
4.99

Novellino Wines now available in California stores such as Pacific Super, Seafood City, Marina Foods, Lion Supermart and Arco to name a few.



Novellino Wines

More and more Filipinos overseas can now look forward to having Novellino wines on store shelves wherever they are in the world.

For 2008 and beyond, Bel Mondo Italia Corp (BMIC), makers of the best-selling Novellino wines, is set on conquering the huge overseas Filipino market, encouraged by its success in California - the company's first export venture.

"We believe that our wines can meet global quality standards and have an opportunity in the international market," BMIC President Vicente Quimbo Jr. said. "Novellino wines are engineered to suit the Filipino/Asian taste and Bel Mondo Italia Corp.'s global expansion strategy is to initially target and prioritize export markets with a high concentration of Filipino and Asian communities."

Novellino is a line of fine wines made from the finest grapes with Italian technology, innovated to suit the Filipino taste and bottled in a state of the art winery in the Philippines.

After seven years in the Philippine market, Novellino Wines has established itself as a market leader in the Philippine wine category, offering good value red and white wines with the qualities that Filipino consumers look for in a wine---characteristically soft, smooth, sweet, fruity and bubbly.

In September 2006, BMIC began exporting Novellino wines to California. It was a milestone in BMIC's history, being the first export venture of the company, and a fearless move---akin to taking on Goliath in the form of the California wine market, the biggest wine region in the USA.

Why California? BMIC General Manager Francis Moral explains: "The venture to California is consistent with the company direction of expanding abroad by initially following the density trail of Filipino communities and California has one of the largest Filipino communities in the US. Second, given the strict and rigid regulations of the US on product safety and quality, successfully getting Novellino in the US would be tantamount to gaining a seal of product excellence of the highest stature. Third, after almost two years of ground work, BMIC found a US importer and distributor who share its mission and enthusiasm in bringing Novellino Wines to the Filipino community in the US."

In the first year alone, four full-container loads of Novellino wines were shipped and sold to stores in California. "We were pleasantly surprised by the outcome. With bigger and more frequent re-orders, Novellino has developed a following in California.", BMIC President Vicente Quimbo Jr. said. "We are getting very positive feedback from our retailers there. Our California experience is showing us that the Novellino taste profile appeals to non-Asians as well. We are perceived as a specialty wine abroad, so we do not really directly compete with traditional wines currently available in the local market. The opportunity is huge even if one measures the potential from a lower per capita wine consumption of Asians in general."

Novellino
Novellino
Novellino

Novellino Wines at the Food and Hotel Vietnam trade exhibition at Ho Chi Minh City with BMIC officers and Vietnamese bussinessmen.

In California, Novellino wines can be found on store shelves of Pacific Super, Seafood City, Marina Foods, Lion Supermart, and Arco to name a few. With Simex International as distributor and LB Imports as importer, a national roll-out to other parts of the USA is part of BMIC's workplan for next year.

This year, according to BMIC General Manager Francis Moral, BMIC worked closely with government agencies and trade organizations to gain exploratory insights and seek inroads in other countries. In May 2007, Novellino was one of the companies invited to join the Philippine business delegation which accompanied President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to a trade mission in Australia and New Zealand. This led to opportunities for Novellino wines to tap the Australian and New Zealand markets.

In August 2007, a trial shipment of Novellino wines landed on the shores of New Zealand. This represented the second export venture of BMIC, with Ascot Imports, a company specializing in bringing good quality Filipino products to New Zealand as its distributor.

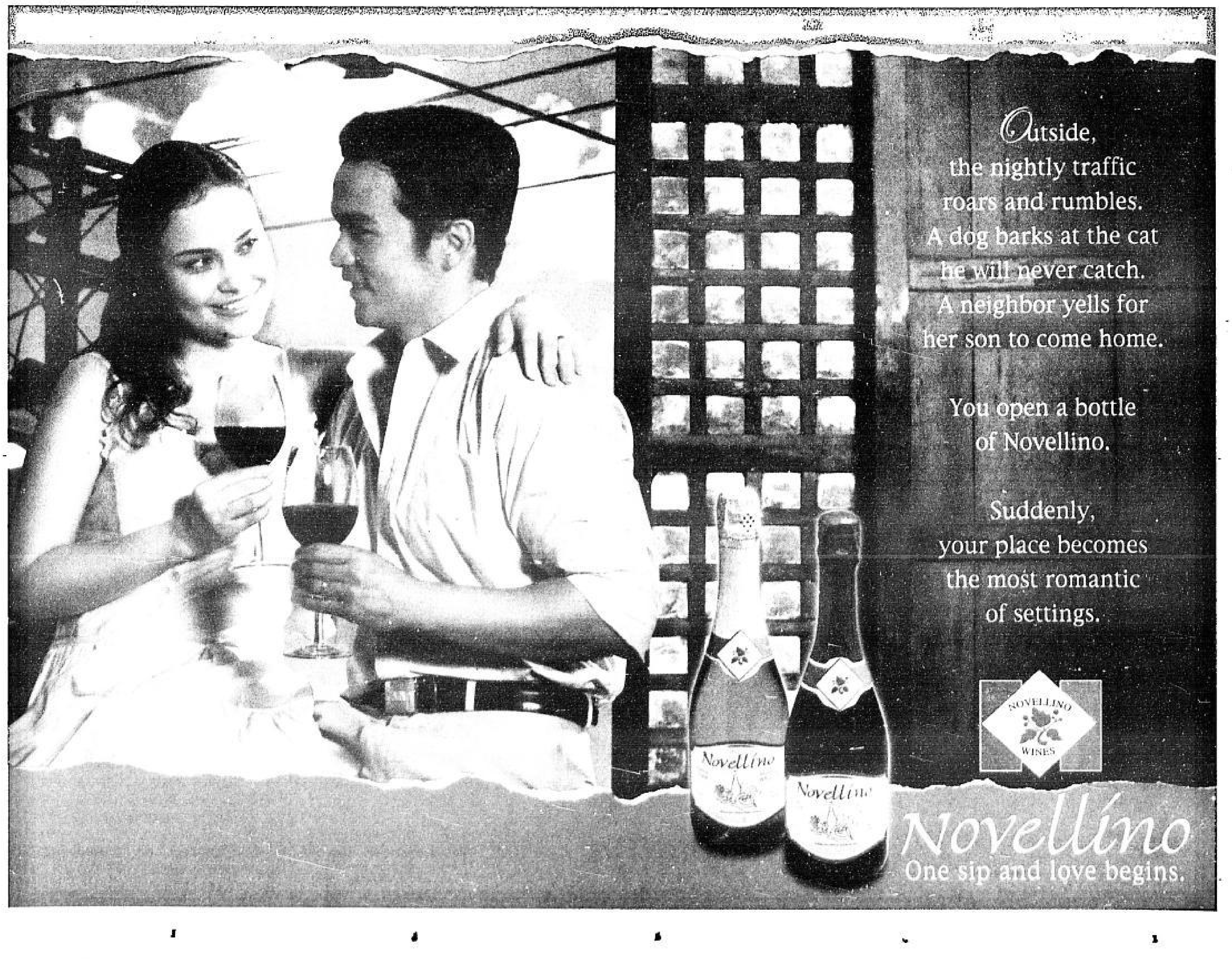
The success of Novellino in California and its strong brand equity and market leadership were important factors behind the decision of Ascot Imports to bring Novellino wines to New Zealand.

Ascot Imports had been looking for new Filipino products to expand their current portfolio and found an interesting match with Novellino wines. Distribution in New Zealand is initially being focused on specialty stores, but moving to the mainstream is a strong possibility within the short term. Novellino wines may soon be in Australian stores as discussions are on-going with an importer/distributor for the Australian market.

More recently, Novellino wines made its debut in the Food and Hotel Vietnam trade exhibition in Ho Chi Minh City last October 30 to November 2, 2007. Wine-tasting activities held at the trade show indicated that the Vietnamese seem to have the same taste preferences in wine as Filipinos do. Indeed, Vietnam promises to be an exciting market for Novellino wines.

Says BMIC GM Francis Moral: "According to the Vietnamese businessmen we met, lifestyles are changing towards sophistication as the population benefits from the fast growth of their economy. Wine will be one of the product categories that will benefit a lot from this trend and this can already be seen in how wine sections of supermarkets are stocking up on a wider assortment of wine products." Vietnam is definitely within BMIC's immediate sights as a new export market.

California is just the beginning, BMIC President Vicente Quimbo promises. "We are not only exporting Novellino wines. We are actually exporting Filipino taste to the world!" And to Filipinos overseas, Novellino wines may very well be the taste of home.



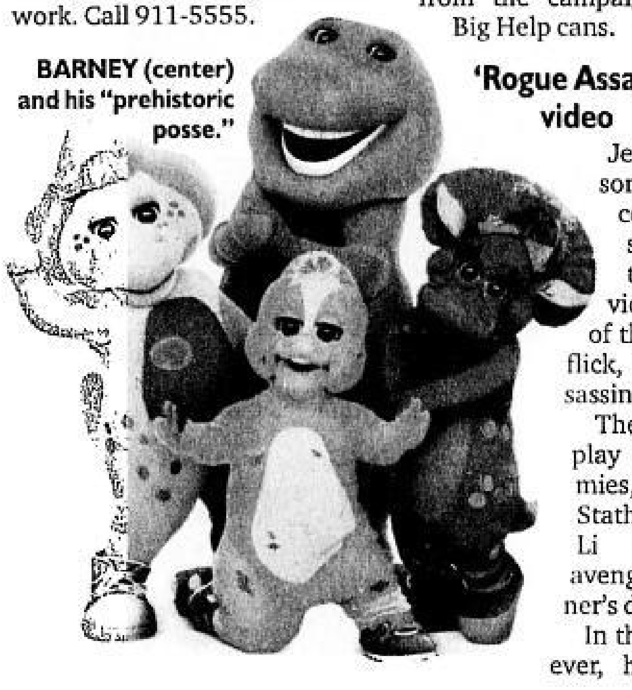
ManoMano sale on final week

MONTAGE

THE BIG CHRISTMAS SALE AT ManoMano (2594 Lamayan st., Sta. Ana Manila) ends tomorrow. ManoMano, a Fair Trade store, showcases the best Philippine handicrafts from all over the country, which are prized both here and abroad. Call (632) 561-0395.

'Let's Imagine Live!'

Everyone's favorite purple dinosaur, Barney, is featured in the fun musical show, "Let's Imagine Live!—The Philippine Tour" from Dec. 19 to 23 at the Araneta Coliseum. With their human friends, Daniel, Ethan, Madison and Taylah, Barney and his "prehistoric posse," Baby Bop, BJ and Riff, set off to test the limits of viewers' imagination. The family show touches on exercise, the environment, healthy eating and teamwork. Call 911-5555.



BARNEY (center) and his "prehistoric posse."

Big Help campaign

Last Dec. 1. Nicksters united in one big "share-lebration" at the Mall of Asia Complex as Nickelodeon's The Big Help 2007 campaign held its culminating activities.

The spirit of sharing overflowed as Nicksters parted with their toys, books, clothes and allowances, with Sam Concepcion and Robi Joseph spearheading the fun program and games. Guests included Sugarpop, young visual artist Hana Richelle Tan, Morning Silhouette, Makisig Morales, and SpongeBob SquarePants.

Last Nov. 30, the groundbreaking ceremonies for the Nickelodeon Batang Bayani GK Village in Pateros were held. Houses will be constructed there with the money collected from the campaign's special Big Help cans.

'Rogue Assassin' on video

Jet Li and Jason Statham continue to slug it out in the uncut video version of the hit action flick, "Rogue Assassin."

The two stars play bitter enemies, with Statham hunting Li down to avenge his partner's death.

In the end, however, he discovers that nothing about Li's character is what it seems.

LI AND STATHAM. Play bitter enemies in hit action film.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 7 p.m., "Mrs. Harris." Tomorrow at 11 p.m., "Little Nikita." Dec. 17 at 9 p.m., "Spies Like Us." Dec. 18 at 11 a.m., "The Last Starfighter." Dec. 19 at 11 a.m., "Fat Man and Little Boy." Dec. 20 at 5 p.m., "La Bamba." Dec. 21 at 9 p.m., "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire."

On Cinemax today at 11 a.m., "Soldier." Tomorrow at 5 p.m., "In the Company of Spies." Dec. 17 at 7 a.m., "Battle of the Bulge." Dec. 18 at 9 p.m., "Apollo 13." Dec. 19 at 9 p.m., "Houdini." Dec. 20 at 7 a.m., "All Quiet on the Western Front." Dec. 21 at 9 p.m., "First Knight."

'Tugtog ng Pasko'

The best of *Pinoy* rock reverberates in "*Tugtog ng Pasko*," a series of rock concerts from Dec. 18 to 22 at the CCP Complex. Schedule: Dec. 18, 6 Cycle Mind. Dec. 19, Kamikazee. Dec. 20, Parokya ni Edgar. Dec. 21, Sponge Cola. Dec. 22, Imago and Sandwich.

'Come to the Stable'

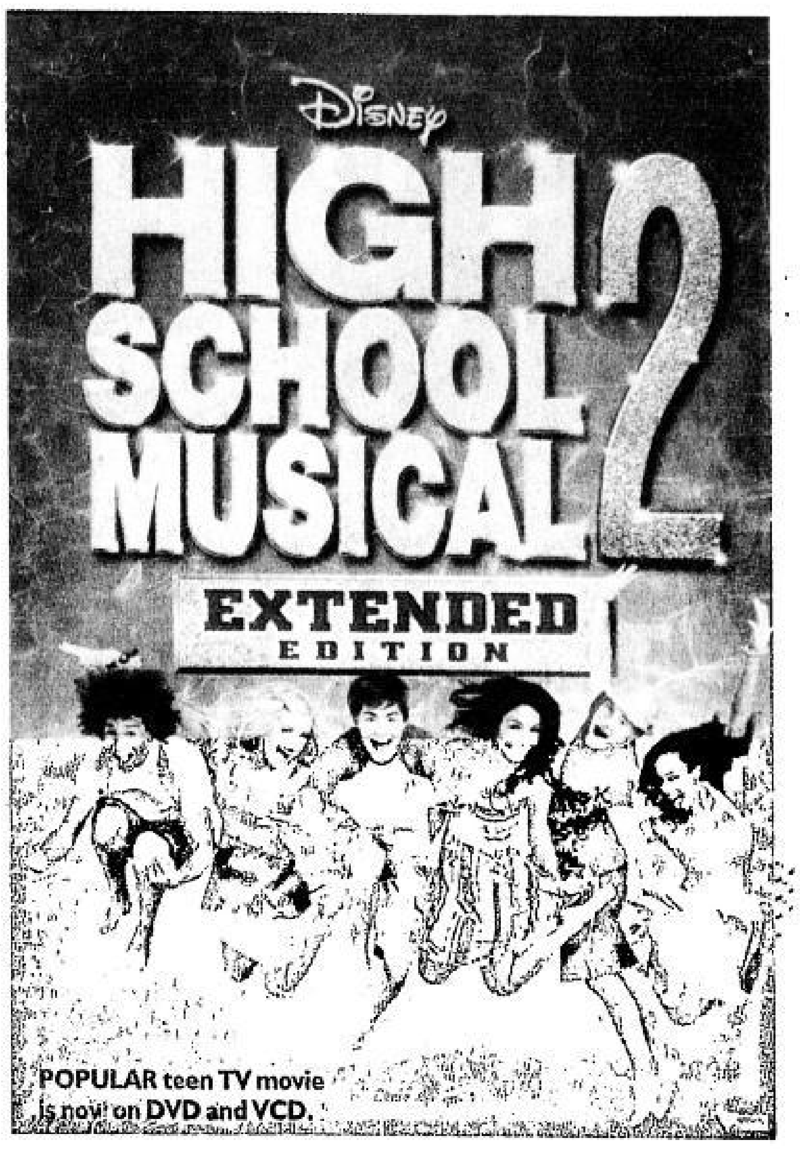
A Christmas concert, "Come to the Stable," will be presented by Sinag Tala on Dec. 18 at 4:30 p.m. at the FEU Chapel, and on Dec. 22 at 6 p.m. at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Mckinley rd., North Forbes. Call 726-1567.

Jed Madela

Jed Madela's "Voice of Christmas" album mall tour hits SM City Taytay today, and the Shangri-La Plaza tomorrow. An autograph signing session follows Jed's performance of selections from his album.

Live Mannequin contest

Act like a live mannequin and win Sta. Lucia East's "Christmas Toy Story's Live Mannequin" contest. Twenty participants will compete from Dec. 17 to 21. Finals will be on Dec. 22. Call 681-5401 to 19 loc. 118.



POPULAR teen TV movie is now on DVD and VCD.

Alumni homecoming

Cor Jesu College, formerly Holy Cross College of Digos, will celebrate its Alumni Homecoming on Dec. 22 (for the elementary department) and Dec. 30 (for high school). Call Gloria Geverola at (082) 553-2433 loc. 112.

'Art2Art'

Professor Jerry Dadap discusses the restoration of the UP Carillon Tower and its melodic bells tomorrow at 2:30 p.m. on Lisa Macuja's program, "Art2Art," on dzRH. The weekly arts program is produced by the Manila Broadcasting company.

DZRH
NATIONWIDE VIA SATELLITE

MACUJA (left) interviews Dadap on her arts program on dzRH.

Yabang Pinoy

Yabang Pinoy and Yahoo Philippines (www.yahoo.com.ph) team up to heighten

MANOMANO/ J3

Loretta Young's enigma lives on

By Behn Cervantes

GRETCHEN MICHAELA Young was born in 1913 in Salt Lake City. She was one of four beautiful sisters their mother took to Hollywood to start life anew after her marriage broke up. In Tinseltown, the ambitious mother gave her goodlooking children the proper training for careers in the movies.

When director Mervyn LeRoy cast eldest sister, Polly Anne, in a film, the young Gretchen volunteered her services because Polly Anne couldn't accept the role. The youngest sibling, Georgina, became the wife of Hollywood's Latin lover, Ricardo Montalban.

Successful transition

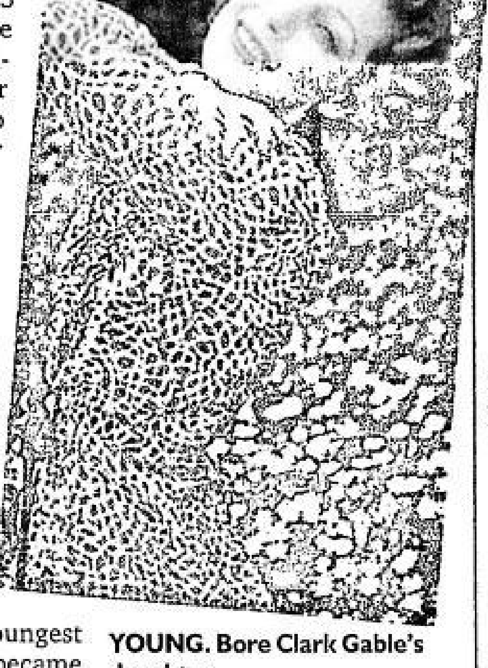
While attending Catholic school, Gretchen appeared in minor roles until she was 14—when she was noticed in "Naughty But Nice." Thereafter, she enjoyed a successful transition from silent films to the talkies.

Then, she was renamed Loretta, a regal beauty with the appropriate voice to enhance her high cheekbones and full lips. A 1951 survey chose her as one of Hollywood's most beautiful actresses, along with the elegant likes of Ava Gardner, Arlene Dahl and Elizabeth Taylor.

She appeared mainly in decorative roles—until she won an Academy Award for "The Farmer's Daughter" in 1947. Her victory surprised Hollywood insiders, who expected Rosalind Russell to win for "Mourning Becomes Electra."

Young was again nominated for 1949's "Come to the Stable." She likewise made her presence felt in such films as "The Bishop's Wife," "Because of You" and "Cause for Alarm."

She unexpectedly retired from Hollywood in 1953 and took on the challenge of starting a new career on television—on "The Loretta Young Show," which won the Emmy three times!



YOUNG. Bore Clark Gable's daughter.

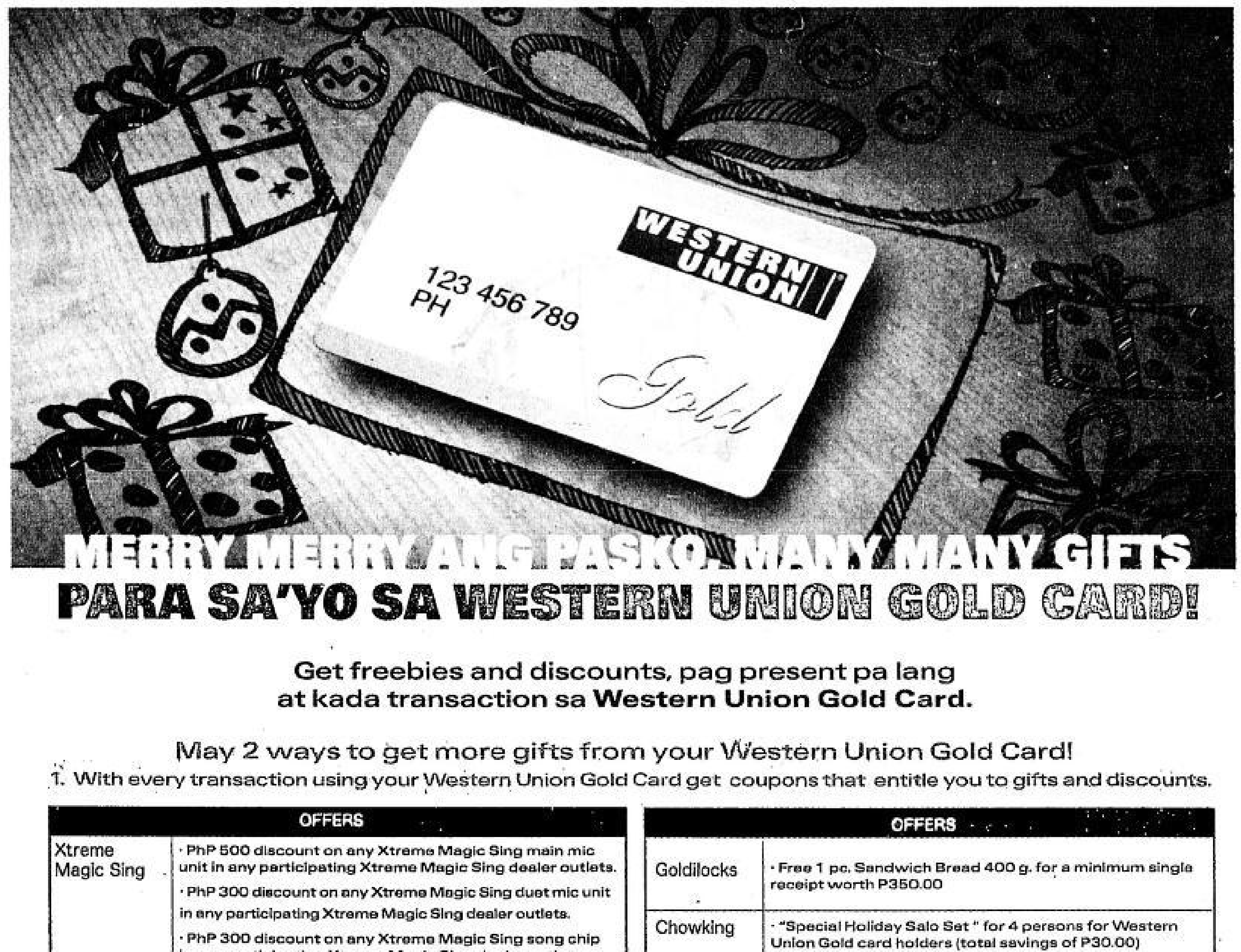
After her TV show folded, the actress became an advocate of Father Peyton's "Rosary Hour," and she was an avid supporter of Catholic charities.

However, Loretta also showed how feisty she could be when pushed against the wall: In 1972, she sued the NBC network for showing her program internationally without her permission. For her unprecedented daring, the show biz icon was awarded $600,000 in damages!

Personal life

But, while she was highly respected in Hollywood, little was known about her personal life: Her elopement with Grant Withers in 1930 ended after merely a year, while her long-time marriage to producer-writer Thomas Lewis also ended in divorce.

Little was heard about Young after she went into permanent retirement. This air of mystery has kept the actress enigmatic through the years. Later, however, Hollywood verified a well-kept secret: Her allegedly adopted daughter was actually sired by—Clark Gable!



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Groban in good position to maintain chart crown

JOSH GROBAN
NOEL
GROBAN. His Christmas album, "Noel," carves out a rare niche in Billboard's chart history.

LOS ANGELES—SOME OF JOSH Groban's fans think he has the voice of an angel. So it seems appropriate that his first attempt at a Christmas album carves out a rare niche in chart history.

With Thanksgiving week's store traffic and an appearance on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" accelerating sales of an album that already had momentum, the singer's "Noel" captures an 81-percent sales increase—and the No. 1 spot on the Billboard 200! The feat makes Groban's set the first Christmas album to lead the big chart in 13 years—and only the second to top the list since 1962!

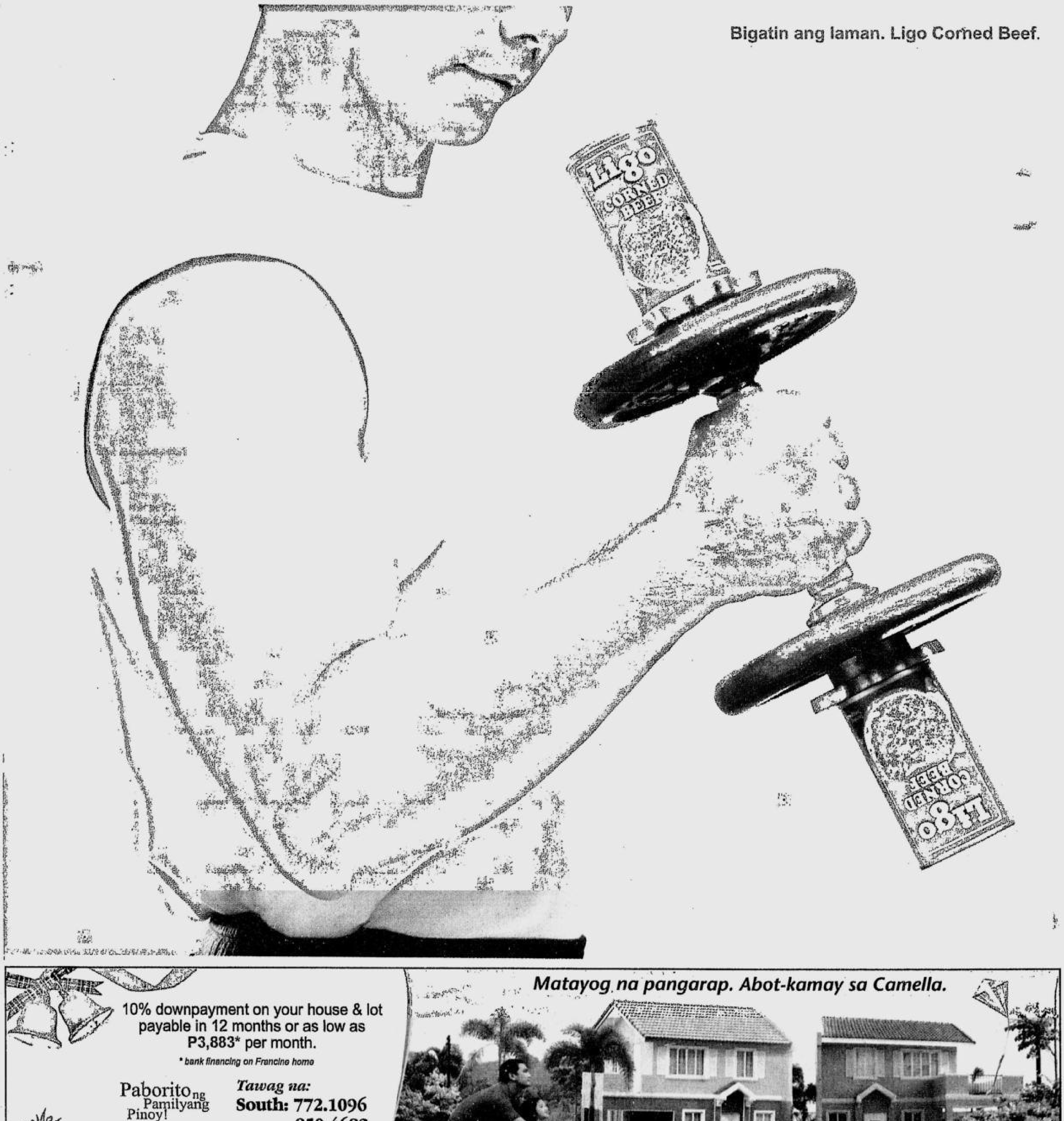
"Noel" garnered 405,000 copies (moving from second place to No. 1), the strongest week of Groban's career, and the largest by any Christmas album since Celine Dion's "These Are Special Times" topped 460,000 in two different weeks of 1998. Groban's sales of 182,000 copies easily seals The Billboard 200's Greatest Gainer award.

Seasonal set

The last seasonal set to crown the pop chart was Kenny G's 1994 release, "Miracles—The Holiday Album," which, like Groban's, rose to the top rung during Thanksgiving. It held on to No. 1 the

GROBAN/ K4

Say hello to Santa, Mickey & Friends at TOY KINGDOM
Turn to pages 2 and 3



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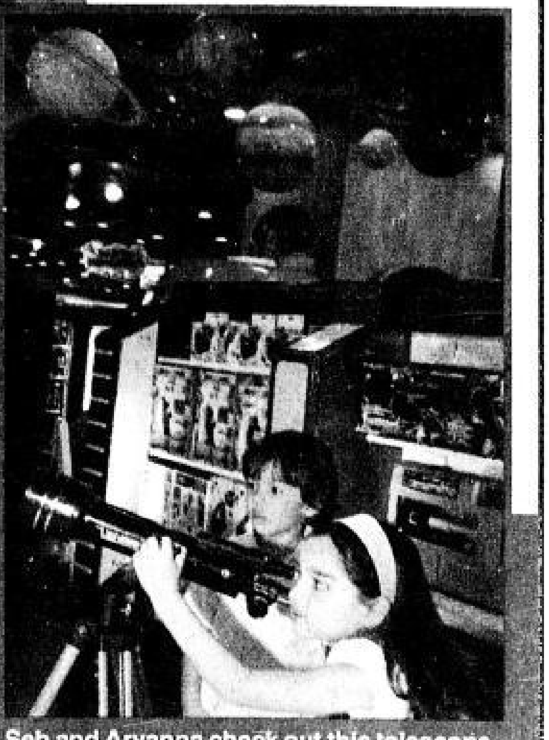
TOY KINGDOM

The new and amazing Toy Kingdom at the Upper Ground Floor, Building A of SM Megamall.

Rides to go has a collection of twist cars, ride on bikes and trikes and re-chargeable cars.

Seb and Aryanna hang around the wooden bridge with their plush bear.


Seb and Aryanna check out this telescope great for cosmic exploration.

TOY KINGDOM

JUST GOT MORE AMAZING AT SM MEGAMALL

Toy Kingdom just got more amazing with a bigger, better, more exciting and fun with a newly renovated store at the SM Megamall.

Kids will feel that they're walking through a toy wonderland as they explore the 3,548.29 square meter toy superstore. They'll be amazed as they navigate through Toy Kingdom's different zones - each one designed as if they've come straight from a story book or a video game. And then again, there are the toys for kids of all ages.

As they enter they are greeted by Toy Kingdom's bright and colorful façade, and friendly and helpful staff. The Yummy-licious **Candy Corner** with a giant pink ice cream cone occupies the left wall, as does the orange bright area for **Gift Wrapping** and **Customer Service**. Opposite this is the **Package Counter** where customers can leave their stuff so they can shop in comfort. Check Out Counters and Cashiers are strategically clustered together in the middle area near the entrance for easy access. But it's the amazing zones that will keep customers spending hours and hours in the new Toy Kingdom Store. It is located at the Upper Ground Floor of the SM Megamall Building A.

izap

interactive zone and access provider

I-Zap is Toy Kingdom's very own internet café.

Tween Zone: Tween Dreams Are Made of This

Tween fashionistas will immediately fall in love with the Tween Zone as they enter through the heart shaped archway. It's like stepping into their dream room with dazzling chandeliers on the ceiling and a fancy mini dresser where they can check out some great finds. The zone houses a hip and chic assortment of stationery items, bags, accessories, crafts, watches, cosmetics, and more. They can also indulge in some girl talk by the pink heart shaped chair.

Girls at Play: Just Between Us Girls

Little girls can experience the glitz and glamour of life on the catwalk at the Girls at Play area, where they can, well, make a grand entrance. The so fab ceiling is in bright

pink, and showcases a flowing design suggestive of the flowing curtains found at real at real fashion shows.

Add to that a cool dressing room and backstage area called the Divas Section, where fashion and branded dolls like Barbie, the Barbie Collection series, and Bratz can be found. Not be missed here are well loved toys like Dora the Explorer, Strawberry Shortcake, Polly Pocket, and My Scene; as well as all things girly like kitchen play sets, playhouses, and doll accessories.

The Magic of Disney

The Disney Zone is a magical world with well loved characters welcoming everyone at the entrance. Kids will be dazzled with its starlit ceiling, droplights that give the spotlight revolving Mickey and Minnie Mouse figures, and a Mickey Mouse shaped ears video wall at the back. All ears - and eyes are on Mickey and friends - as the Mickey ears shaped side entrance signals and fun and exciting world of everything Disney.

Artist's Circle: Art Attack

Kids are prone to art attacks at the Artist's Circle as they enter its palette shaped entrance complete with a paintbrush, awesome 3D paint splats on the ceiling, and crayon and art frame shaped modules that inspire imagination and creativity. Designed like an art studio, this colorful world will bring out the artistic side of our young artists with shelves and shelves of arts and crafts stuff.

Anime Action

It's all fun and adventure at the Anime Zone with its Japanese inspired entrance that leads the way for anime lovers of all ages. It's live action all the way as countless figures and toys inspired by popular anime characters from Gundam and Naruto.

I-Zone: Get Techie

The I-Zone is a complete one stop gaming shop where fun and learning are just a click away. From intelligent learning to gaming fun, the I-Zone at Toy Kingdom has an extensive collection of the best selling and the latest in interactive technology for pre-schoolers to adults. A gaming cove lets you try out new games on your favorite game consoles.

I-Zap: Cyber Central

The I-Zap is Toy's Kingdom's very own internet café. It's an interactive zone and service provider creating a fantastic internet gaming world. Experience an ultimate virtual experience at I-Zap where everything e is possible.

Enter the world of Anime via this Japanese-inspired arc

Cuddly Corner: A Walk on the Wild

Wooden bridges with a bear and panda crossing lead to Cuddly Corner, a mini forest of soft and huggable plush animal toys and more. You'll walk on the wild side with huge trees surrounded with life size animals like a giraffe, lion, deer, monkeys, and more. A waterwheel highlights animals living near the water.

Smart Starters: Playing and Learning

With a 3D gear piece on the ceiling, train tracks on the floor, and two massive toon inspired trains, the Smart Starters Zone is a kids' playground for learning. Find toys that lead infants and toddlers to learn along side books and infants needs to give younger kids a lot of learning fun.

Gameslandia: That's Entertainment

Giant Uno Stacko and Jenga displays mark the entrance as colorful circular installations on the ceiling set the mood for Gameslandia. It's all fun and entertainment with educational board games, matching and memory games, and simple puzzles that can also help develop your kids' strategy skills and memory, or encourage his or her musical inclinations with musical instruments.

Rides to Go: Fun in the Sun

Rides to Go literally lets the sun shine in with a sky designed ceiling complete with a 3D sun and clouds. Here, Toy Kingdom brings the outdoor playground indoors with its selection of rechargeable cars, basic twist cars, bikes, and trikes on display. A 3D figure of a boy riding on an actual bike takes kids on a journey along rolling hills and greens. Not to be missed is the area housing indoor/outdoor toys like playhouses and slides from Little Tikes, Chicco, Step 2, and more.

Active Zone: Sports Fan

The Active Zone is a sports buff's dream come true. Here, you can find everything sporty and outdoorsy - from all kids of balls and inflatables, and other accessories. Kids can also go extreme here at the wall climbing area.

Speed World: Fast Track

Race to Speedworld and get some adrenaline rush with its race track inspired design and unending rows of mean street machines and model cars to the best RC cars and planes. The zone's centerpiece is a 3D figure of a flashy sports car displayed at the center of the ramp.

Superheroes: Supernatural Powers

With its brightly lit entrance, kids can enjoy a superhero welcome at the Superheroes Zone of Toy Kingdom. Find your favorite superhero figures as you set foot inside a spaceship inspired world and join the battle against the evil forces of the universe.

Discovery Zone: Whiz Kids

With planets suspended from the ceiling, Baby Einsteins and Little Bonds will have a lot of explore at the Discovery Zone. The zone has fascinating toys for the inquisitive young mind - from the coolest spy gadgets and scientific instruments to building interesting 3D puzzles to construction sets to collectible historical figures like knights.

Party Kingdom: Celebra-zone

Everything a kid needs for a great party can be found right here at the Party Kingdom. Whoop it up and celebrate big time with the zone's collection of party favors, balloons, and other party needs displayed on whimsical carnival trailer inspired modules.

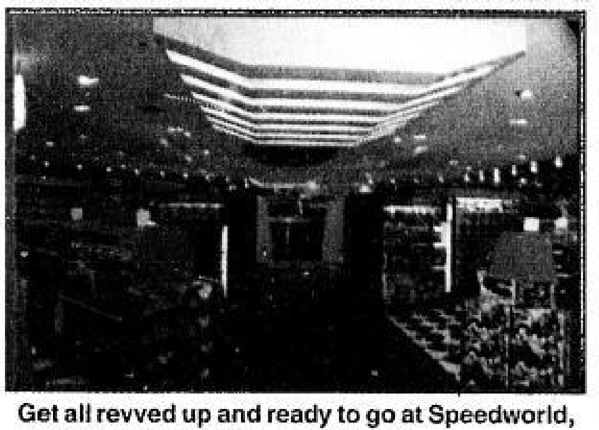
Fashion branded dolls can be found at the Divas Section of Girls At Play.

Droplights draw attention to the revolving 3D of Mickey and Minnie located at the center of the Disney zone.

Tween fashionistas will fall in love with Tween Zone right from this pink heart-shaped entry.

Rodrigo plays with some mean street machines at Speedworld.

Karmina tries out some kikay stuff by the ultra-chic mini-dresser.


Get all revved up and ready to go at Speedworld, which is designed like a race track.

Seb plays with colorful Uno Stacko.

Say hello to Santa, Mickey & Friends at Toy Kingdom

Join us at Toy Kingdom this December for a delightful gathering of favorite characters who have been-and will always be-the mainstays of our Christmas celebrations.

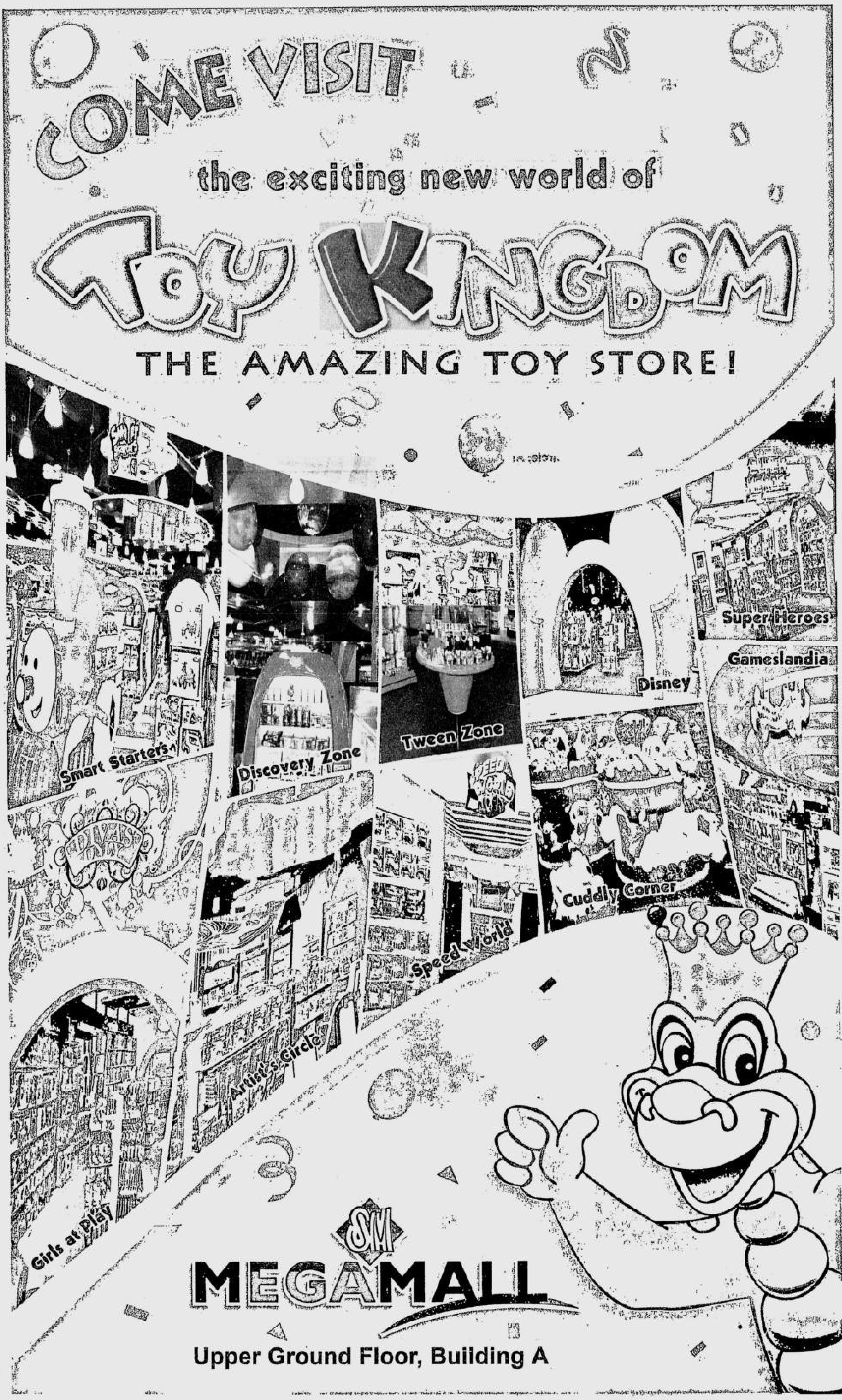
Meet & Greet Schedule

MICKEY & FRIENDS
(12nn • 2pm • 4pm • 6pm)

Dec. 18 - 23 Toy Kingdom SM Megamall

SANTA
(3 - 4:30pm / 5 - 6:30pm)

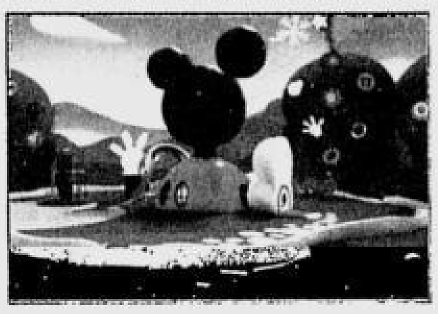
Dec. 18	Toy Kingdom SM Southmall
Dec. 19	Toy Kingdom SM City North Edsa
Dec. 20	Toy Kingdom SM Mall of Asia
Dec. 21	Toy Kingdom Makati
Dec. 22	Toy Kingdom Megamall
Dec. 23	Toy Kingdom The Podium


COME VISIT
the exciting new world of
TOY KINGDOM
THE AMAZING TOY STORE!
Smart Starters
Discovery Zone
Tween Zone
Disney
Super Heroes
Gameslandia
Cuddly Corner
Speed World
Artist's Circle
Girls at Play

SM MEGAMALL
Upper Ground Floor, Building A

Holiday fun at the Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

Fun events and great take-home and gifting stuff await kids at Toy Kingdom's Mickey Mouse Clubhouse now thru December 31.



Meet Mickey and Friends: Goofy, Minnie & Donald

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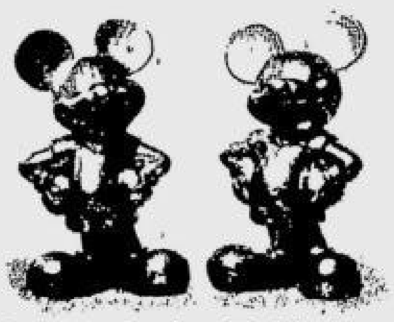

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THE ALL-STARS. The World Hip-hop Champs show off their winning form.

UP Diliman builds 'dynasty' in Skechers Streetdance Battle

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES-DILIMAN spared no punches—or dance moves—in capturing the championship title for the third straight year in the biggest, hottest and toughest streetdance competition in the country: The Skechers Streetdance Battle.

The UP Streetdance Club has established a virtual dynasty in the college division with their three-peat victory and, in the process, earned not just the P100,000 cash prize, but the more coveted bragging rights as the best streetdance crew in the land.

Full-throttle frenzy

From the minute they took the stage, the entire venue went into full-throttle frenzy. After all, the group has been the champion of the college division since the Skechers Streetdance Battle started two years ago.

The victory of St. Mark's Institute, champions of the high school division, was just as sweet. A first time win, after all, is just as worthy to be celebrated. They likewise went home with P100,000 in cash.

The other teams that did their school mighty proud were Ateneo de Manila University, which copped the first runner-up honors in both the college and high school divisions; Mapua-Makati, which placed second runner-up in the college division; and School of the Holy Spirit, which placed second runner-up in the high school division.

Finalists

Hosts DJ Mo Twister, MTV VJ Andi and JC Cuadrado were all praises for the finalists. Even judges Maynard Marcellano, Wilson Ong, John Supan, Maribeth Bichara and Joy Castillo-Viado expressed pride in having such a highly talented roster of finalists.

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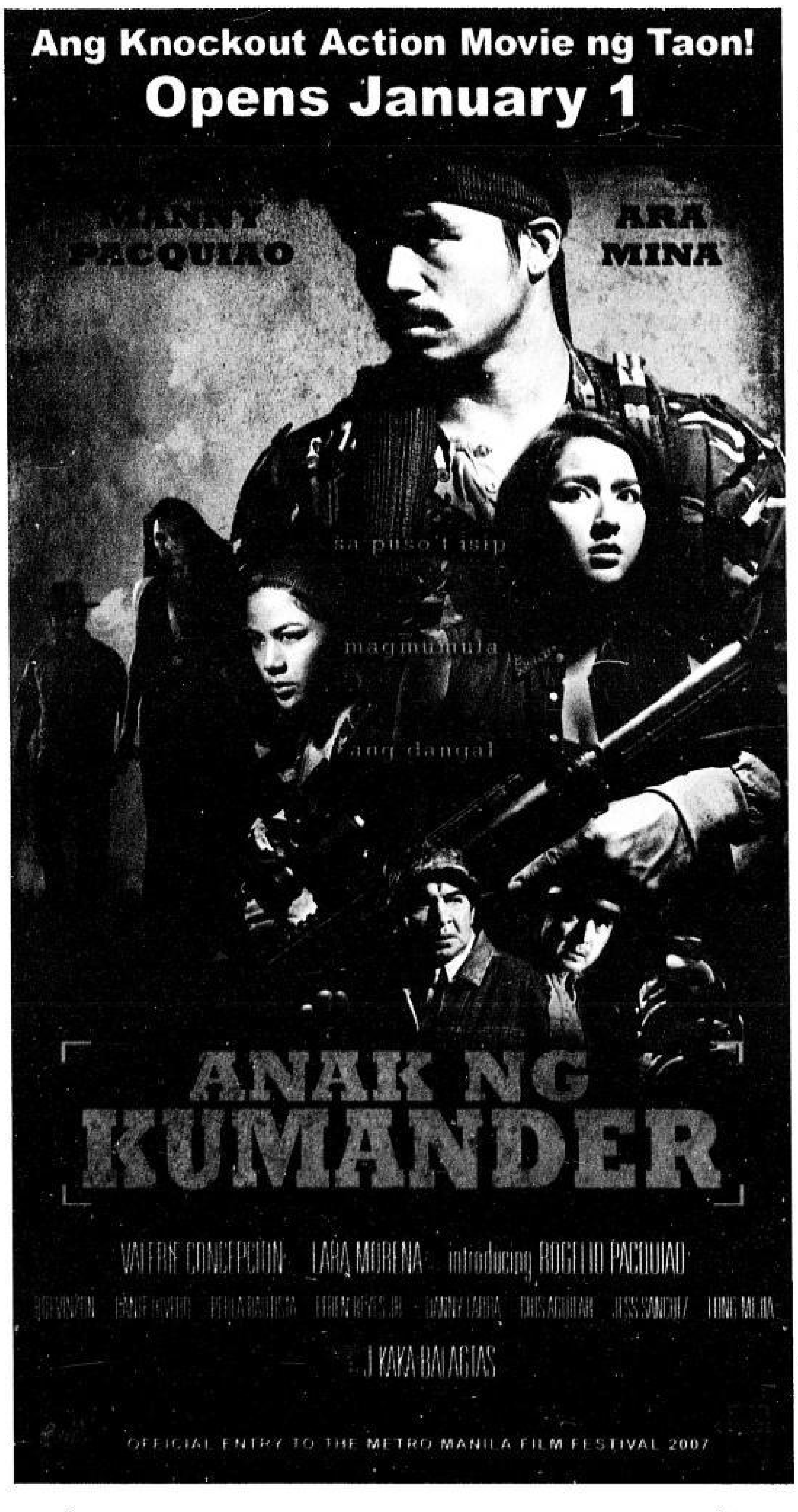
THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines' Streetdance Club (top) and St. Mark's Institute (above) bagged top honors in the competition's college and high school divisions, respectively.

Pride was also what the winners of this year's Skechers Streetstyle Awards felt. They include Franco Miguel Lumanlan (De La Salle University) and Ma. Chryssanta Villasenor (St. Scholastica's College). Coming in second place were Tristan Aries Bandoma of UP Manila and Far Eastern University's Aurea Anne Norona.

And since pride was the order of the night, one group that made the country truly proud—the All-Stars—served as the event's special guest performers. The World Hip-hop Champions brought the house down as they displayed the killer moves that have defeated many dance teams in the international arena.



'The Kingdom's' realistic action sequences scorch the big screen

By Nestor U. Torre

MAKERS OF CONTEMPORARY and topical movies strive mightily to make their productions acutely believable, the better for their thematic points to affect and influence viewers.

But, most of their efforts come off as second best to Peter Berg's, whose "The Kingdom" is so realistic that some of its sequences come off as hot as today's headlines, and reach out of the screen to "bite" moviegoers in the face.

Conflict zone

That's because "The Kingdom" seeks to do nothing less than place viewers in the political storm center of today's most contentious conflict zone—the war-torn Middle East.

Set in Saudi Arabia, where the situation is supposed to be less combative, the movie shows that terrorists have made the entire region a volatile powder keg of violence and death.

At film's start, over a hundred Americans in a "safe" US enclave in Saudi Arabia are massacred after a car bomb explodes the "peace" to kingdom come.

FBI agents led by Jamie Foxx's character are flown over to determine which terrorist group is responsible for the horrible carnage. They're given a very tough time by local authorities, whose loyalty to their government turns out to be exceedingly suspect. So, the FBI agents face danger from both sides—a terrible way to live (and die).

Despite the dangers involved, the agents keep investigating the terrorist attack, and the locals turn on them even more angrily when they uncover evidence that links the car bomb to a notorious terrorist group.

Terrorists

This is when the already grittily realistic movie ups the docu-drama ante and puts the viewer in the center of the deadly action: One of the FBI agents is caught by the terrorists, so the other American investigators have to rush into their heavily defended lair in the "wrong" side of town.

As bullets zing and ricochet all around them, Foxx and the other FBI agents shoot their way into the fortified stronghold, with death taunting them at every turn.

FOXX. Plays an FBI agent in Peter Berg's actioner.

THE MOVIE'S longest action sequence alone is worth the price of admission.

This long sequence is the film's best—on its own, it's worth the price of admission. It's so realistically staged and executed that one wonders how the actors were able to survive it relatively unscathed:

Huge holes are gouged out of the wall immediately behind them by high-powered firearms, grenades and mortar shells, and all hell truly breaks loose!

Political problem

Yes, the terrorists are subdued and defeated, but the film's "happy" ending is tentative, at best. The political problem it dramatizes is so complex that the production scrupulously makes sure that viewers don't think that it can be easily solved.

In fact, it intimates that the problem will take *generations* to deal with, as it ends with shots of royal *and* terrorist children "innocently" contemplating the decidedly uncertain future—and their respective combative roles in it!.

RP, UK celebrate Friendship Week

STREET SMART

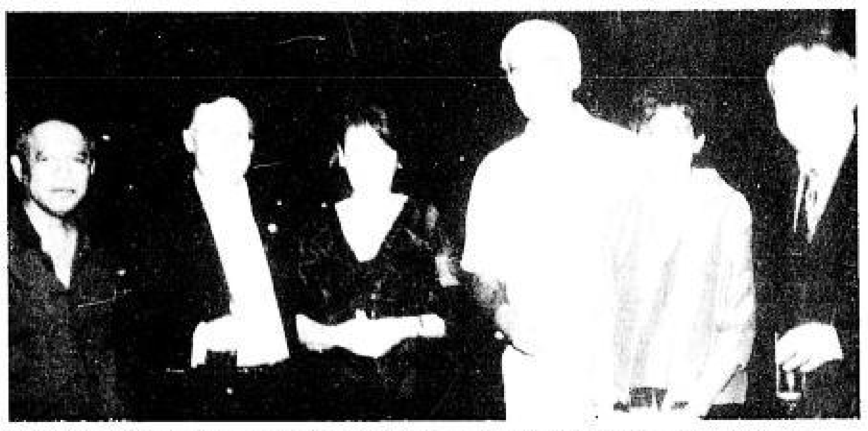
Mandy Navasero

THE BRITISH EMBASSY, ALONG with the British Council, the British Alumni Association and the British Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines, successfully celebrated the First RP-UK Friendship Week recently, with the "Visit Britain" exhibition at Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

Among those in attendance at the reception hosted by UK Ambassador Peter Beckingham and his wife, Jill, at the British Ambassador's residence in Makati were Frank Evaristo, Philip Morris' Chris Nelson, and former UK Ambassador Paul Dimond and his wife, Carolyn.

Other activities

Other activities that marked the week-long occasion included the UK Ambassador's GM Management Seminar at the Manila Peninsula, equestrian games and a glitzy gala dinner at the Manila Polo Club.


UK AMBASSADOR Peter Beckingham and wife Jill (fourth and fifth from left), with (from left) Frank Evaristo, former Ambassador Paul Diamond and wife Carolyn and Chris Nelson.

At the RCBC Plaza, a roundtable discussion was held between Filipino and British businessmen. A medical mission spearheaded by the Philippine Christian Foundation for the residents of Barangay Vitas in Tondo capped the eventful week.

According to former Ambassador Dimond, they are encouraging British nationals to visit the Philippines to help make the country a major tourist destination in Asia.

* * *

The Yule Go Wild Christmas Village Bazaar at the A. Venue Hall continues to thrill patrons at the corner of Makati ave. and Gen. Luna st. Its animal park, food concessionaires and 200 other specialty booths are attracting villagers and visitors alike. It also features a fireworks display and live entertainment. The unique bazaar is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

* * *

"A Christmas Celebration" will be held at the LRI Design Plaza on Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. at the LRI Atrium, featuring celebrated pianist, Dr. Raul Sunico, and the UST Singers rendering timeless carols and rare Christmas chants.

* * *

Join the Mandy Navasero Batanes Photo Safari either on Feb. 22-25, Mar. 13-17 or Mar. 19-22. Call 899-1767, or e-mail mandynavasero @yahoo.com.

Groban in good position...

From page K1

following week, and jumped back to the summit during the Christmas frame.

When the smooth-jazz "Miracles" moved to the top of the page, it marked the first time in decades that a Christmas album had reached No. 1.

The last to do so had been Mitch Miller's "Holiday Sing Along With Mitch," a byproduct of his popular NBC series, "Sing Along With Mitch." Released in 1961, the same year that Miller's series hit the air, the album ascended to the chart's throne in January 1962. It was Miller's third No. 1 album—and his second seasonal offering to lead the list.

It will take years to find out whether Groban can match Miller with a second, chart-topping Christmas album. In the near term, "Noel" has a real shot at notching multiple weeks at No. 1, as G's "Miracles" did. The week after Thanksgiving, Groban was booked to revisit "Oprah," along with appearances on NBC's "Christmas at Rockefeller Center" on ABC's "Good Morning, America."

Rise to the top

Between now and Christmas, Groban is also lined up for "Live With Regis and Kelly," "Rachael Ray," "Larry King Live" and a Christmas Eve return to "Good Morning, America."

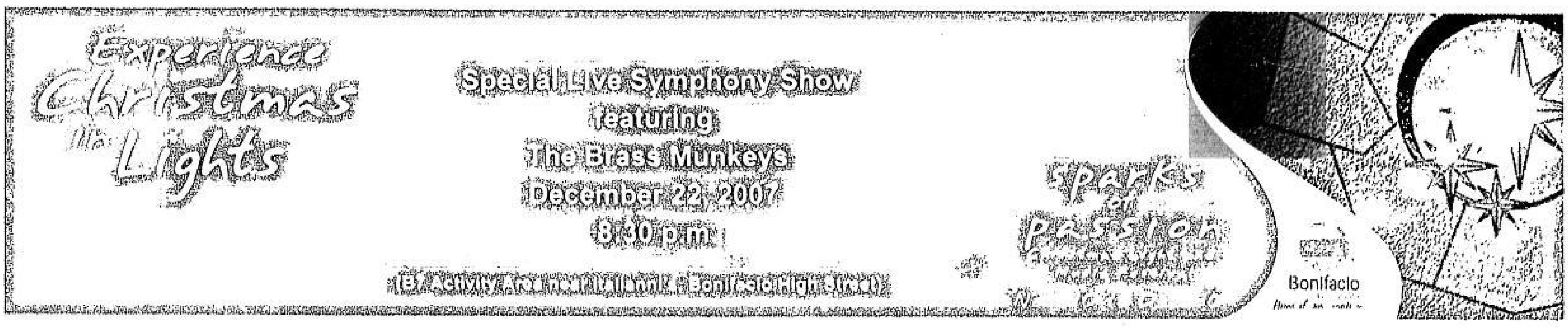
With all that TV exposure and the album already showing more sales oomph than any Christmas collection of the last nine years, combined with a soft release schedule for the remainder of the gift-buying season, it would not be a big surprise to see Groban rally more weeks at No. 1.

This marks Groban's second chart-topper. He scored his first when his second studio album, "Closer," shot from No. 11 to No. 1 during a soft week in January 2004.

His 2006 album, "Awake," peaked at No. 2, while his self-titled 2001 debut grew its way to No. 8—the year after it was released. It's almost as if the music industry forgot Thanksgiving was happening! *Reuters*

IN THIS ISSUE
■ **Lights come back on Broadway** /J2

SATURDAY Special


Experience Christmas Lights
Special Live Symphony Show
featuring
The Brass Munkeys
December 22, 2007
8:30 p.m.
(B7 Activity Area near Italianni's - Bonifacio High Street)
Sparks of Passion
Bonifacio

NOW SHOWING

Cate Blanchett revisits career-making role in perfunctory sequel

BLANCHETT. Reprises the role of Queen Elizabeth I in Kapur's visually stunning historical drama.

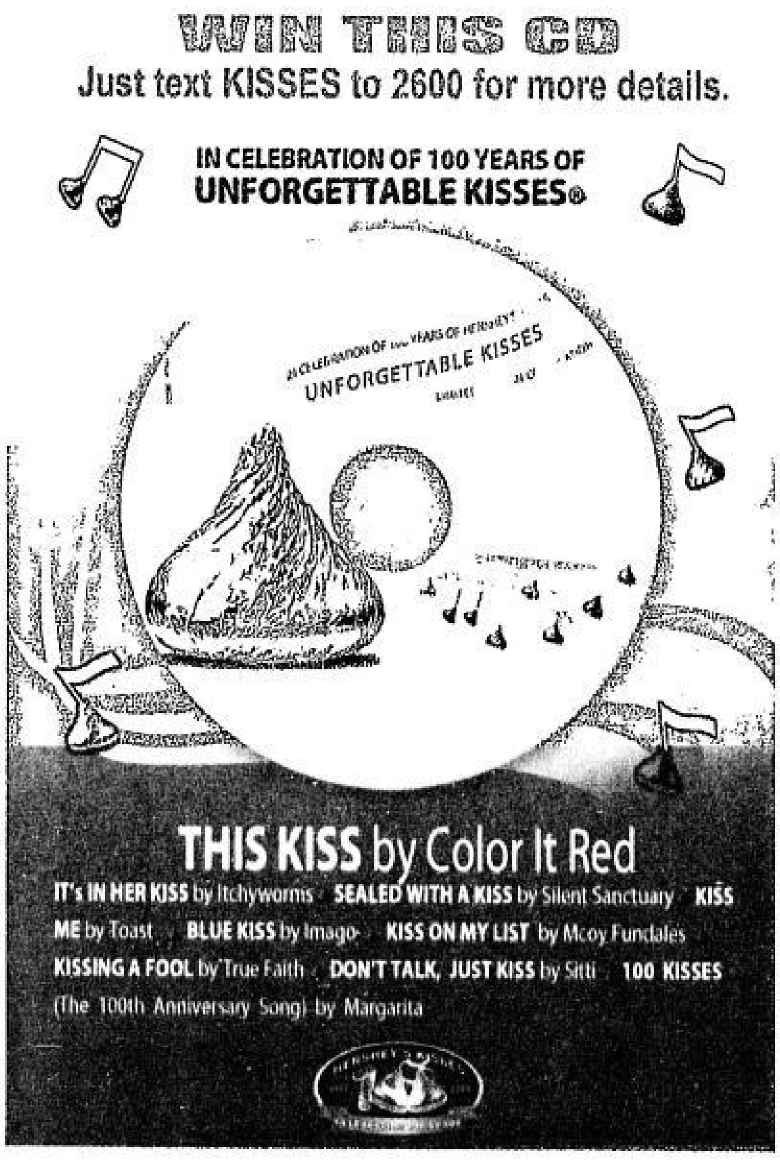
By Rito P. Asilo

"Elizabeth: The Golden Age"
D: Shekhar Kapur
S: Cate Blanchett, Clive Owen

ALL IS FAIR IN LOVE and war, so they say. But, in "The Golden Age," England's Queen Elizabeth I, played by the magnificent Cate Blanchett (who reprises the career-making role she originated nine years ago in Shekhar Kapur's Oscar-nominated historical drama, "Elizabeth"), finds that sometimes, it's easier to maneuver affairs of the state than manage affairs of the heart. Alas, even well-loved monarchs don't always get everything they want!

Kapur's technically dazzling film explores the relationship of the so-called Virgin Queen and Sir

CATE/ L2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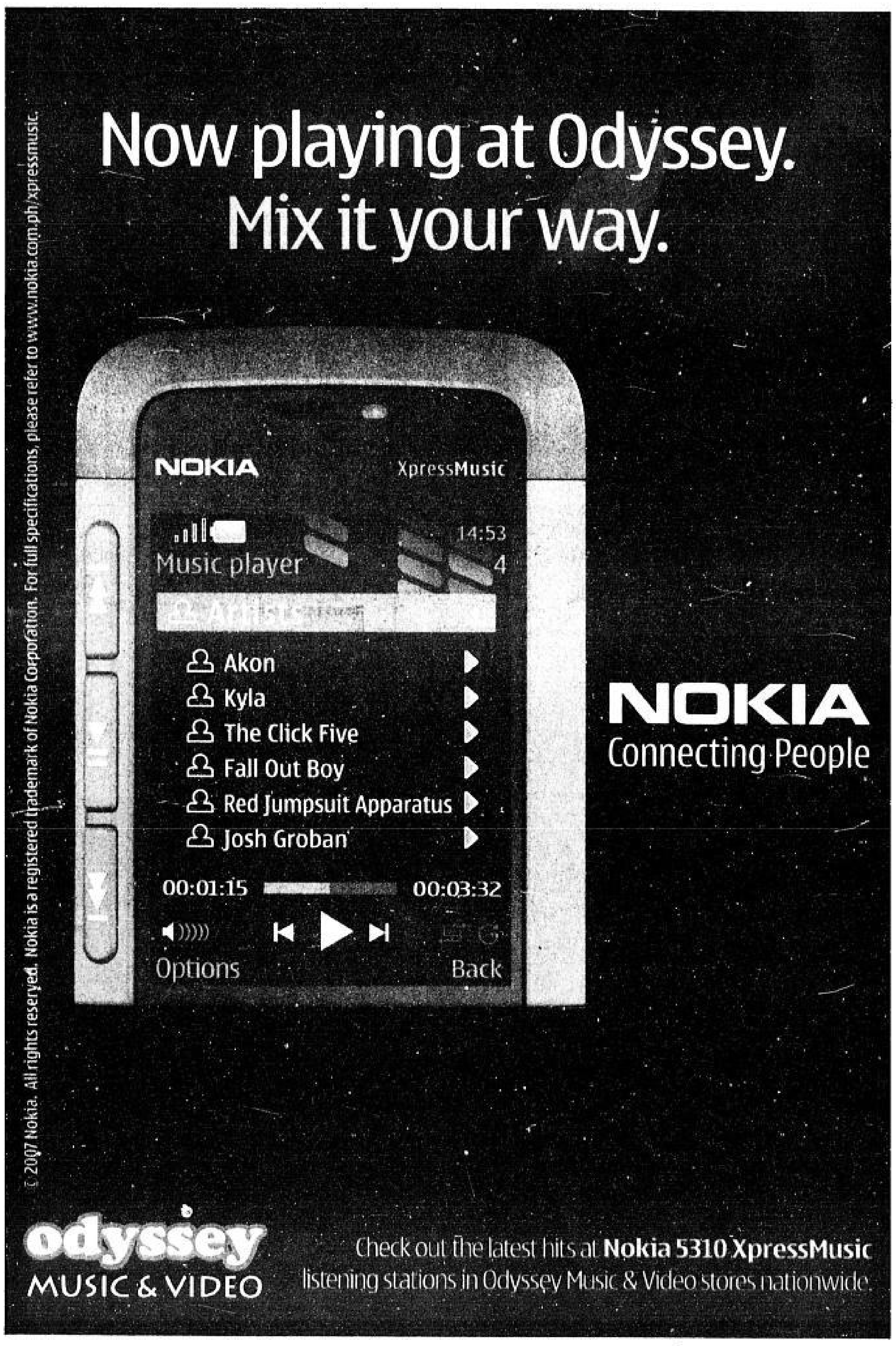
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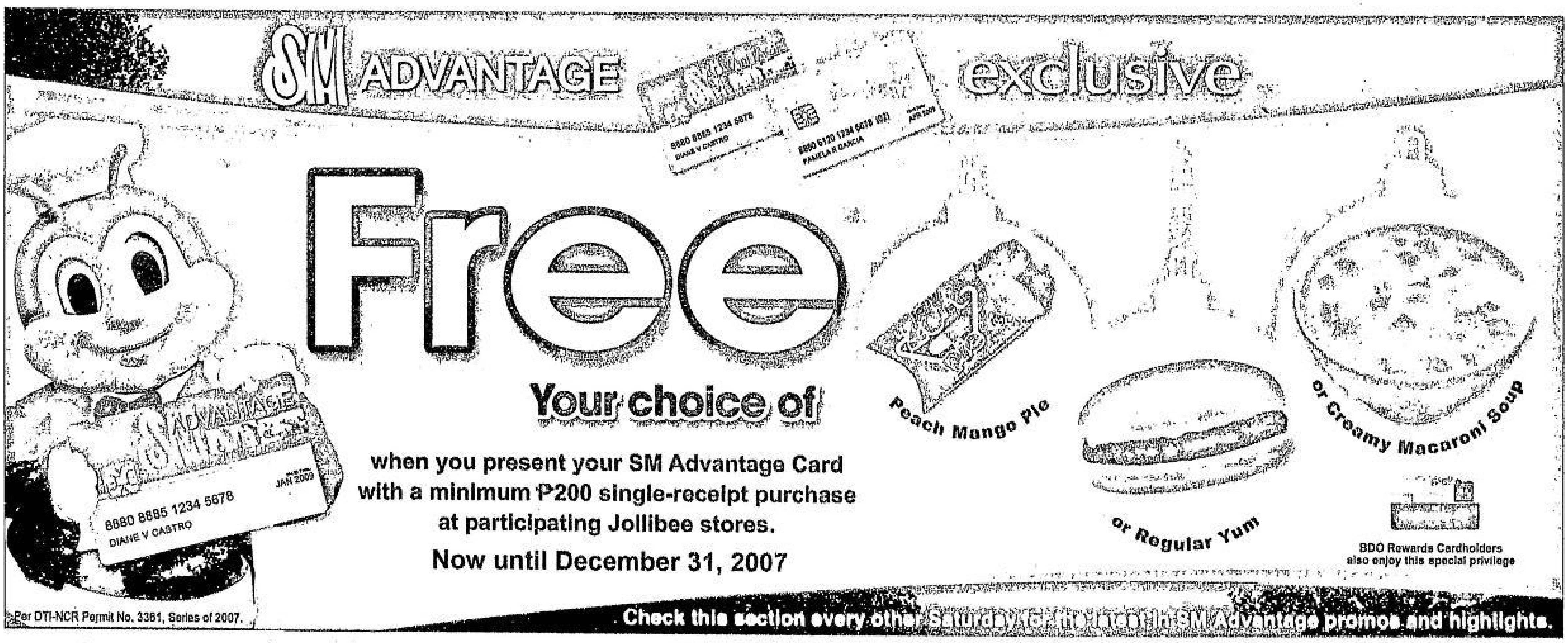
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3361, Series of 2007.
Check this section every other Saturday for the latest in SM Advantage promos and highlights.

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P 300 (Reserved Seats)

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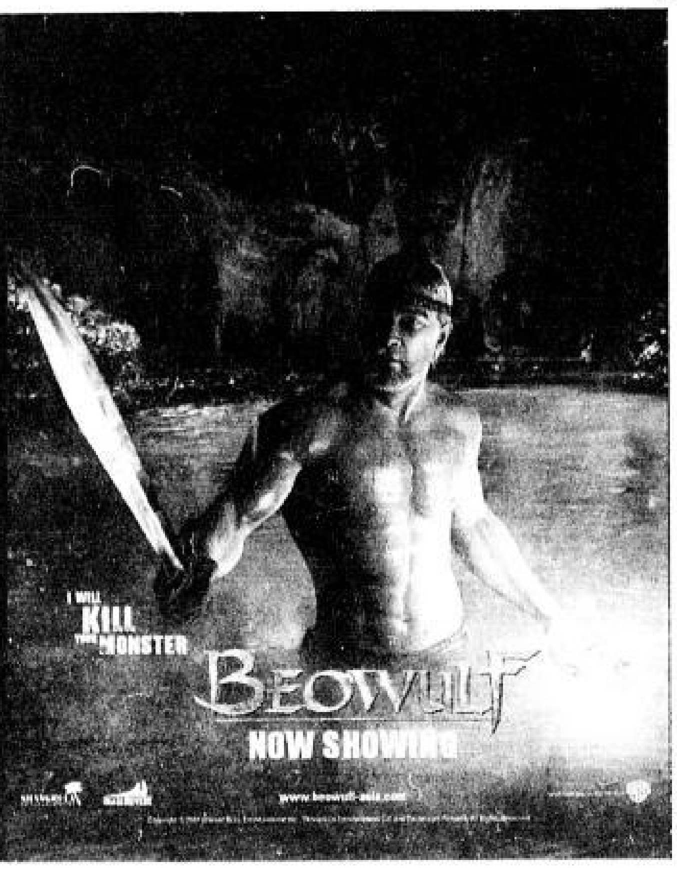
12:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m., 9:00 p.m.
Please call 929 5452 for inquiries.

In partnership with
Array's Technology Inc.



METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
IMAX
POLAR EXPRESS 3D [illegible]
12:30 PM • 3:00 PM • 8:00 PM • 10:30 PM
BEOWULF 3D [illegible]
10:00 AM • 5:30 PM • 1:00 AM
1. ELIZABETH
2. CATACOMBS
3. DEATH PROOF
4. BATANES
5. PASUKOB
6. SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK

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THE GOLDEN COMPASS
CENTERSTAGE
RESERVED
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THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
ELIZABETH
CINEMA 2
THE GOLDEN COMPASS
For ticket reservations, dial 6338976
All major credit cards accepted

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1. BEOWULF (DIGITAL 3D)
2. ENCHANTED
3. HITMAN
4. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
5. PASUKOB
6. ELIZABETH
7. GOLDEN COMPASS
8. BATANES
9. CATACOMBS
10. DEATH PROOF
11. ONE MORE CHANCE
12. THE KINGDOM

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1. ELIZABETH
2. BEOWULF
3. GOLDEN COMPASS
4. ONE MORE CHANCE
5. SHIRI/CARTOON NETWORK
6. BATANES
7. ENCHANTED
8. CATACOMBS
9. HITMAN
10. PASUKOB
11. DEATH PROOF
12. HOOD OF HORROR

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1. EASTERN PROMISES
2. ENCHANTED
3. PASUKOB
4. HITMAN
5. ONE MORE CHANCE
6. SHIRI
7. GOLDEN COMPASS
8. BATANES
9. BEOWULF
10. THE KINGDOM
11. DEATH PROOF
12. CARTOON NETWORK

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1. DEATH PROOF
2. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3. PASUKOB
4. BATANES

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1. DEATH PROOF
2. ELIZABETH
3. GOLDEN COMPASS
4. CARTOON NETWORK/ PASUKOB
5. CATACOMBS
6. ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1. BATANES
2. DEATH PROOF
3. GOLDEN COMPASS
4. PASUKOB

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2. BATANES
3. ONE MORE CHANCE
4. ELIZABETH
5. PASUKOB
6. DEATH PROOF
7. SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK
8. CATACOMBS
9. HOOD OF HORROR

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1. GOLDEN COMPASS
2. DEATH PROOF
3. ELIZABETH
4. PASUKOB
5. BATANES
6. BEOWULF
7. ONE MORE CHANCE
8. CARTOON NETWORK/ SHIRI
9. THE KINGDOM
10. EASTERN PROMISES

NOW OPEN
SM SUPERCENTER MUNTINLUPA 862 5693
1. BATANES
2. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3. ELIZABETH
4. PASUKOB

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2. CATACOMBS
3. VHAGETS/ SHIRI
4. BATANES
5. DEATH PROOF
6. ELIZABETH
7. ONE MORE CHANCE
8. THE KINGDOM
9. PASUKOB
10. BEOWULF
11. HITMAN
12. ENCHANTED

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1. GOLDEN COMPASS
2. BATANES
3. PASUKOB
4. RESERVED

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A group of North Korean terrorists infiltrates the South with plans to ignite a second Korean war. Hee, North Korea's best assassin, returns to Seoul to kill Lim, an arms dealer trying to procure a liquid explosive, so powerful that one gallon could destroy a city. Agents from the South are soon on the case, and the arms race begins.

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MTRCB Rating: R-13

LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1. HITMAN
2. ENCHANTED
3. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4. ONE MORE CHANCE
5. BATANES
6. PASUKOB
7. SHIRI
8. EASTERN PROMISES

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1. GOLDEN COMPASS
2. PASUKOB
3. BATANES
4. HITMAN

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1. BATANES
2. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
3. PASUKOB
4. ONE MORE CHANCE

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2. THE GAME PLAN
3. PASUKOB
4. MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM

NOW OPEN
SM CITY TAYTAY 286-2502 to 04
1. PASUKOB
2. BATANES
3. GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1. MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
2. THE GAMEPLAN
3. GOLDEN COMPASS
4. HITMAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637081-85
1. THE GOLDEN COMPASS
2. SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK
3. THE KINGDOM
4. VHAGETS
5. FRED CLAUSE/ BATANES
6. PASUKOB

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5340811
1. PASUKOB/ LIONS FOR LAMBS
2. THE GAMEPLAN
3. HITMAN
4. GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1. GOLDEN COMPASS
2. ONE MORE CHANCE
3. PASUKOB
4. LIONS FOR LAMBS

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1. HITMAN
2. SHIRI
3. THE GAME PLAN
4. GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1. GOLDEN COMPASS
2. THE KINGDOM
3. THE GAMEPLAN
4. BOOGEYMAN 2/ CARTOON NETWORK
5. PASUKOB
6. CARTOON NETWORK

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1. HITMAN
2. PASUKOB
3. GOLDEN COMPASS
4. THE GAMEPLAN

VISAYAS
MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1. HITMAN
2. THE GAMEPLAN
3. SHIRI/ CARTOON NETWORK
4. WEDDING DAZE
5. THE KINGDOM
6. GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CAGAYAN DE ORO (088)859-2884
1. THE KINGDOM
2. PASUKOB
3. 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
4. GOLDEN COMPASS

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1. NANNY DIARIES
2. RESERVED
3. SHIRI
4. GOLDEN COMPASS
5. HITMAN
6. THE GAMEPLAN
7. RESERVED
8. FRED CLAUSE

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1. EASTERN PROMISES
2. FRED CLAUSE
3. GOLDEN COMPASS
4. THE GAMEPLAN
5. CARTOON NETWORK/ EL CANTANTE
6. VHAGETS
7. UNREST
8. SHIRI

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1. HITMAN
2. THE KINGDOM
3. MR. MAGORIUM'S WONDER EMPORIUM
4. THE GOLDEN COMPASS

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

"ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE." Overwhelming visual beauty.

Cate Blanchett revisits...

From page L1

Walter Raleigh (Clive Owen), the brilliant poet *cum* dashing explorer, who was involved in the early colonization of America in the 16th century (he named the state of Virginia in honor of the queen's virginity)—when Spain was still the world's most powerful empire, under King Philip II (yes, the Spanish monarch after whom our dear country was named), who's raring to wage a holy war against the protestant queen and her kingdom!

Soon after, Elizabeth has her hands full: As she fights her growing albeit unrequited attraction to Raleigh, she also finds her reign challenged not only by Philip II (Jordi Molla), but also by Mary, Queen of Scots (played with remarkable grace by Samantha Morton), a devout Catholic, who's next in line to the British throne. And, the outnumbered British military has to outwit the powerful Spanish Armada that wishes to vanquish the only remaining nation that stands in its quest for world domination!

Kapur fills the screen with dreamy, provocative images, crafts beautifully imagined cinematic eye-candy and uses a straightforward storytelling style to examine the iconic protagonist's bigger-than-life story.

With picture-perfect cinematography, seamless technical craftsmanship and grand production design, he effectively transports viewers back to the heyday of the British monarchy. The historical film genre has never looked this good!

However, the movie makes some mistakes that compromise its thematic content and integrity: For instance, Elizabeth would have been 52 years old in 1585, the year the events in the movie are said to have taken place, while Raleigh would only be 32!

OWEN. Plays object of Elizabeth's affection.

Once again, Blanchett delivers a high-wire thespic act that overshadows even the film's overwhelming visual beauty. The versatile actress' charismatic presence and intelligence make it hard for the audience to suspend disbelief that Raleigh would choose a beautiful but seemingly vacuous lady-in-waiting over her! She limns the protagonist's emotional highs and lows with dignity and subtle strength—and makes it hard for any Oscar voter worth his salt not to sit up and applaud!

In the end, as she contemplates a bright future for her kingdom, she likewise meditates about her future alone. This is a just queen who swears to punish her wards not for their beliefs, but for their deeds. She also knows that every triumph comes with a sacrifice—which she welcomes with resigned acceptance. Elizabeth then utters a thoughtful prayer for her sake: "Lord, give me the strength to bear this great freedom!"

Araneta Center araneta center.net Gateway Ali MALL Farmers Plaza Farmers Market

Gateway Cineplex 10
EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE
ADMIT ONE

ELIZABETH	CATACOMB	DEATH PROOF	GOLDEN COMPASS	ELIZABETH
1:05 | 3:55 6:45 | 9:30	12:10 | 2:30 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30	12:50 | 3:00 5:10 | 7:20 | 9:30	12:10 | 2:30 4:50 | 7:10 | 9:30	3:20 | 9:00 GOLDEN COMPASS 12:50 | 6:10
BEOWULF	ONE MORE CHANCE	THE KINGDOM	BATANES 1:15 | 4:00 6:45 | 9:30	ENCHANTED
2:25 | 7:05	12:45 | 3:40 6:35 | 9:30	12:10 | 4:50 | 9:30	PASUKOB 1:50 | 4:20 6:50 | 9:20	1:45 | 4:20 6:55 | 9:30

COMPLETELY UNOBSTRUCTED VIEWS
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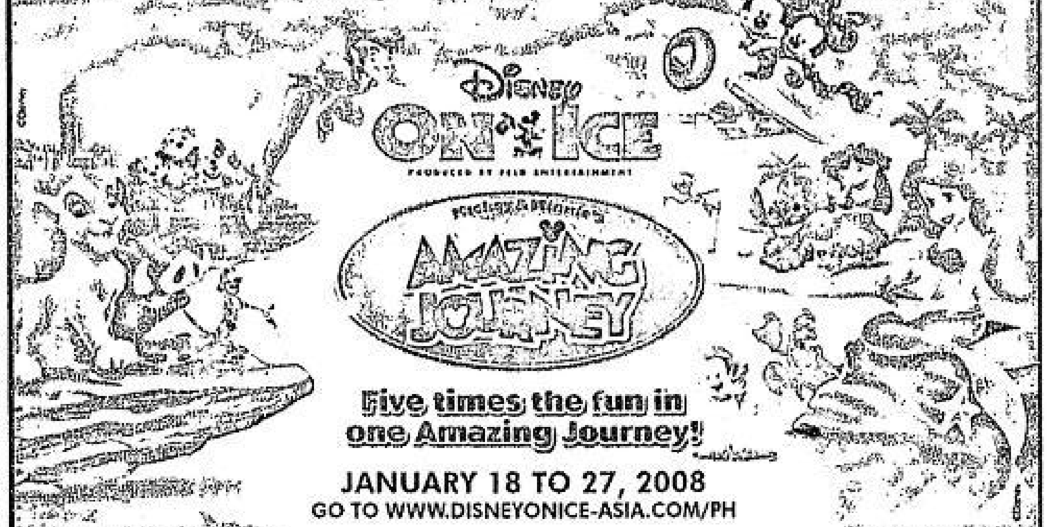

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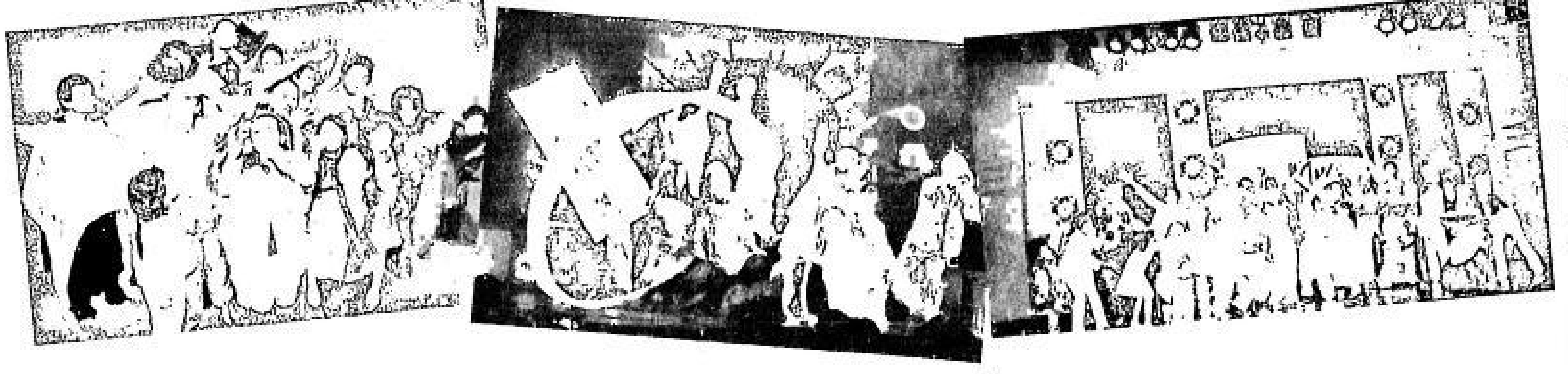

'Tsinoy—Kaisa Ka!' revue returns onstage tomorrow

THE KAISA PARA SA KAUNLARAN Foundation's "Tsinoy—Kaisa Ka!" musical revue will have a repeat performance at 3 p.m. tomorrow, at Kaisa's own theater in Intramuros, sponsored by the Alumni Association of Uno High School. More performances early next year are also in the works. For details, call 252-1920 or 527-6086.

CROWD-PLEASING scenes (above photos) from acclaimed musical.

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

"IN THE TRADITION OF *THE LORD OF THE RINGS* AND *HARRY POTTER*, *THE GOLDEN COMPASS* TAKES ITS PLACE AMONGST THE GREAT FANTASY FILMS OF ALL TIME." - *Ben Lyons / E!*

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2ND WEEK

THE GOLDEN COMPASS

FROM THE PRODUCER OF "THE LORD OF THE RINGS"

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41
DOLBY DIGITAL

THE GOLDEN COMPASS PG13 2:20,4:50,7:20,9:50	ELIZABETH THE GOLDEN AGE PG13 1:00,3:30,6:00,8:30	THE GOLDEN COMPASS PG13 12:20,2:50,5:20,7:50,10:20
THE KINGDOM R13 12:30,2:55,5:20,7:45,10:10	DEATH PROOF R13 1:30,3.40,5:50,8:00,10:10	ELIZABETH THE GOLDEN AGE PG13 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30

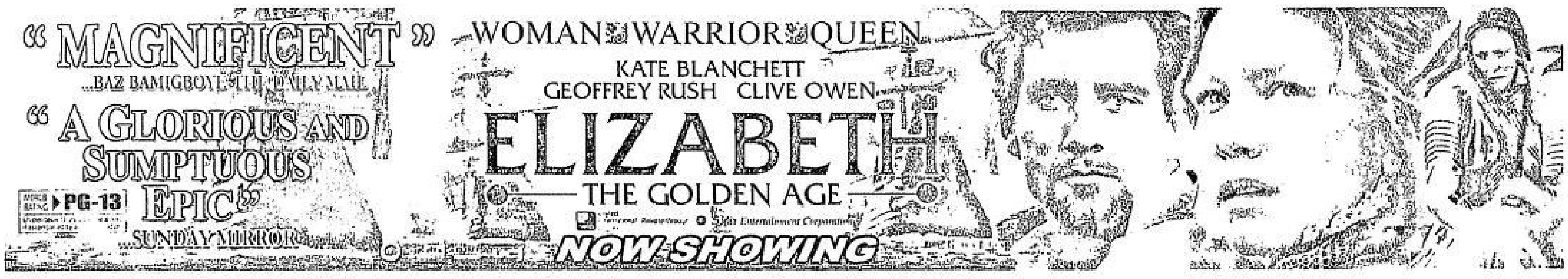
MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

CONGRATULATIONS to the following winners!

DECEMBER 2, 2007
P100,000 SHOPPING SPREE
WONG KIU SUEN
MARY MARGARET S. JOSON

DECEMBER 9, 2007
P100,000 SHOPPING SPREE
MA. TERESA BALDONADO
MARCELINO J. MENDOZA

POWER PLANT MALL
PROMO RUNS FROM NOVEMBER 1 TO DECEMBER 2 2007
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-489, Series of 2007



" MAGNIFICENT "
...BAZ BAMIGBOYE, THE DAILY MAIL
" A GLORIOUS AND SUMPTUOUS EPIC "
SUNDAY MIRROR
PG-13
WOMAN WARRIOR QUEEN
KATE BLANCHETT
GEOFFREY RUSH CLIVE OWEN
ELIZABETH
THE GOLDEN AGE
NOW SHOWING

AT THE CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS G03 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729-7777

GLORIETTA 1	1 CATACOMB	2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS	3 HOOD OF HORROR	4 HITMAN
GLORIETTA 4	1 ENCHANTED	2 THE KINGDOM	3 THX ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 GONE BABY GONE	5 BATANES	6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS	7 DEATH PROOF
GREENBELT 1	1 PAPER DOLLS	2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS		
GREENBELT 2	1 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 DEATH PROOF GUARANTEED SEATS	4 GONE BABY GONE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 EASTERN PROMISES GUARANTEED SEATS	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS	2 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN COMPASS		
	3 DEATH PROOF	4 CATACOMB	5 THE KINGDOM	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS	2 THE GAME PLAN	3 FRED CLAUS	4 EASTERN PROMISES
MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE GOLDEN COMPASS	2 DEATH PROOF		
	3 HOOD OF HORROR	4 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE	5 CATACOMB	
TRINOMA	1 BATANES	2 DEATH PROOF	3 ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HOOD OF HORROR GUARANTEED SEATS
	5 ENCHANTED	6 CATACOMB	7 THX THE GOLDEN COMPASS GUARANTEED SEATS	

AT THE MALLS

CONCIERGE HOTLINE NUMBERS:
Glorietta - 752 7272
Greenbelt - 757 4853 to 54
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; 772 1860
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc. 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519
TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala

glorietta	Philippine Madrigal Singers with The Company December 15; 2007; 6pm; Glorietta 4 Park
GREENBELT	Greenbelt 2 Saturday Night Disco Fever December 15; 10pm; Greenbelt 2 Al Fresco Area
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Christmas Cantata Series Featuring Alabang New Life Christian Center December 15; 6pm; Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Gingerbread House Decoration and Exhibit December 14 & 15; 10am to 3pm; Activity Center and Rotonda Areas
MARKET! MARKET!	The Philippine Star Balikbayan Fair December 14 to 16; Activity Center and Central Plaza
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents FIDDLER ON THE ROOF November 9 - December 16, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com
Ayala MUSEUM	WATER: THE MEDIUM by Juvenal Sanso November 24 to January 13, 2008; Ground Floor Gallery For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	Christmas Chorale featuring Pops Fernandez and The UP Cherubim and Seraphim December 16; 6pm; Activity Center FREE Christmas Gift Bag for every P500 worth of purchase. See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-938, Series of 2007 December 1 to 31

METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL - PHILIPPINES OFFICIAL ENTRY
Ms. Gloria Diaz
Derek Ramsay
Ms. Gina Pareño
SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
JOSE JAVIER REYES

AYALA MALLS CINEMAS STARGAZING
Meet and greet the stars of
SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
Judy Ann Santos Ryan Agoncillo
and other surprise guest celebrities
DECEMBER 16, 2007 • SUNDAY
6:00 PM • Glorietta Activity Center
Reserved seats for the first 200 moviegoers who will present any movie ticket purchased in either Glorietta 4 or Glorietta 1 Cinemas

MAS X MAS sa ABS-CBN
See your favorite ABS-CBN Stars on Sunday, December 16, at the Glorietta Activity Center.
Show starts at 1PM
ABS-CBN

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! TriNoma

THE COUNTRY'S FAB FOUR IN ONE FABULOUS COMEDY!

RUFFA GUTIERREZ RUFA MAE QUINTO IZA CALZADO MARIAN RIVERA

DESPERADAS

all they need is love... and can these men give love?

WENDELL RAMOS Jay R TJ TRINIDAD Introducing WILL DEVAUGHN

Special Participation of NOVA VILLA Also Starring RYAN EIGENMANN CHARLIE DAVAO GINA ALAJAR TIRSO CRUZ III

Text DESPERADAS to 239

Directed by Joel C. Lamangan, dgpi

www.regalmultimedia.net/desperadas

MET TATHIONE PILOT TOUCH CARD CALAYAN Kiss & Co. Information Gateway

REGAL ENTERTAINMENT, INC. and RVM

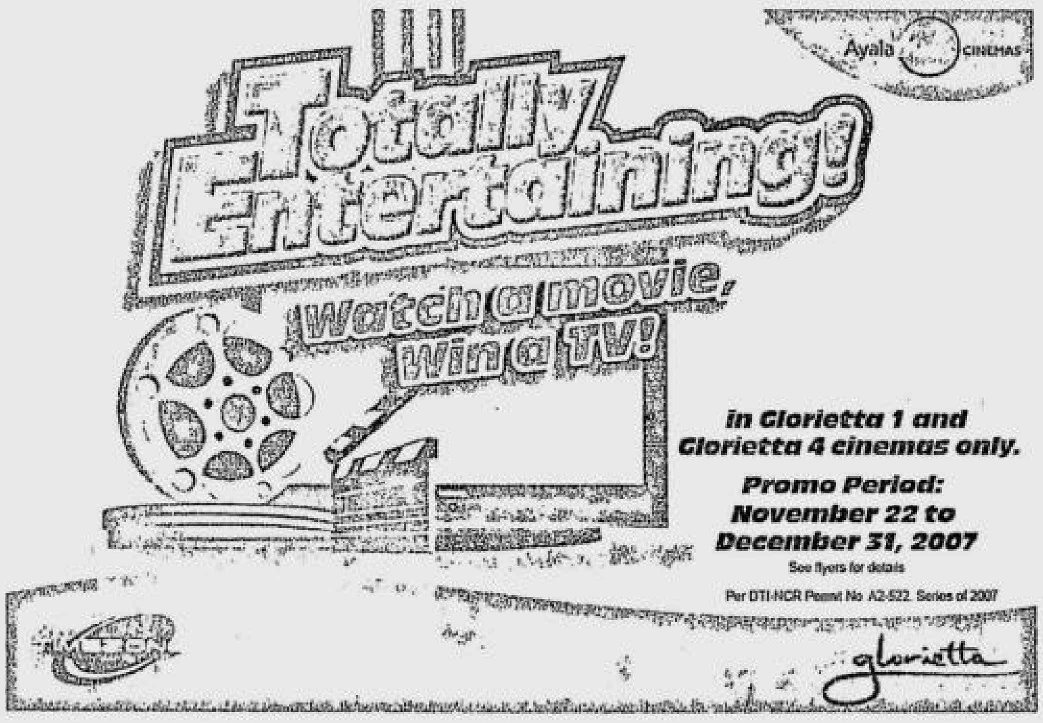
MALL TOUR

December 15 - SM Pampanga; 5 PM • December 16 - SM Taytay; 5 PM
December 22 - SM Bicutan; 5 PM • December 29 - Regal Extravaganza; Glorietta Activity Center, 5 PM

PREMIERE NIGHT

December 23 - SM Megamall Cinema 10; 7 PM

OPENS IN THEATERS JAN. 1



Totally Entertaining!

Watch a movie, win a TV!

in Glorietta 1 and Glorietta 4 cinemas only.

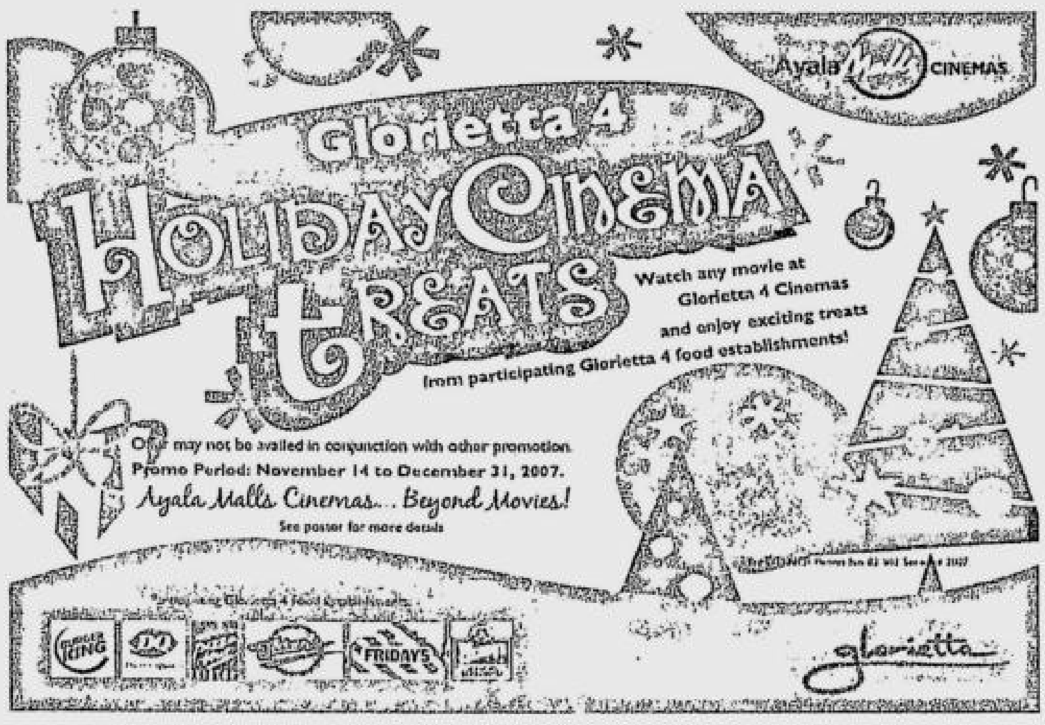
Promo Period: November 22 to December 31, 2007

See flyers for details

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-522, Series of 2007

Ayala Cinemas

glorietta



Glorietta 4 Holiday Cinema Treats

Watch any movie at Glorietta 4 Cinemas and enjoy exciting treats from participating Glorietta 4 food establishments!

Offer may not be availed in conjunction with other promotion.
Promo Period: November 14 to December 31, 2007.

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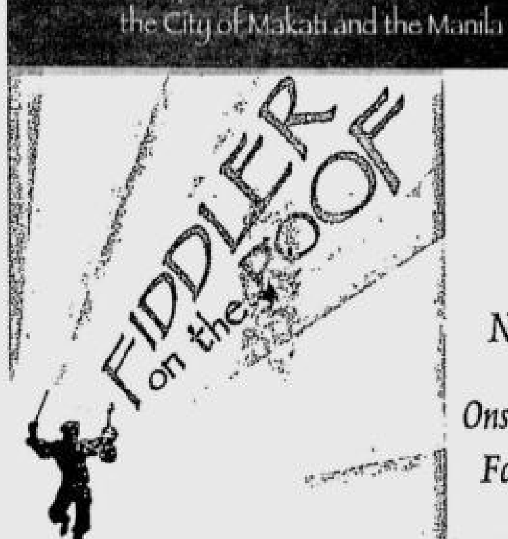

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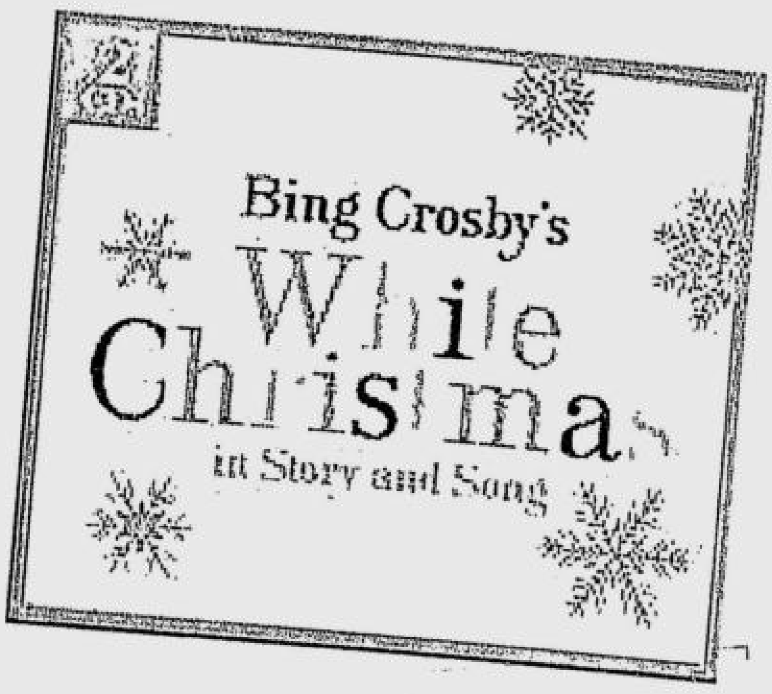
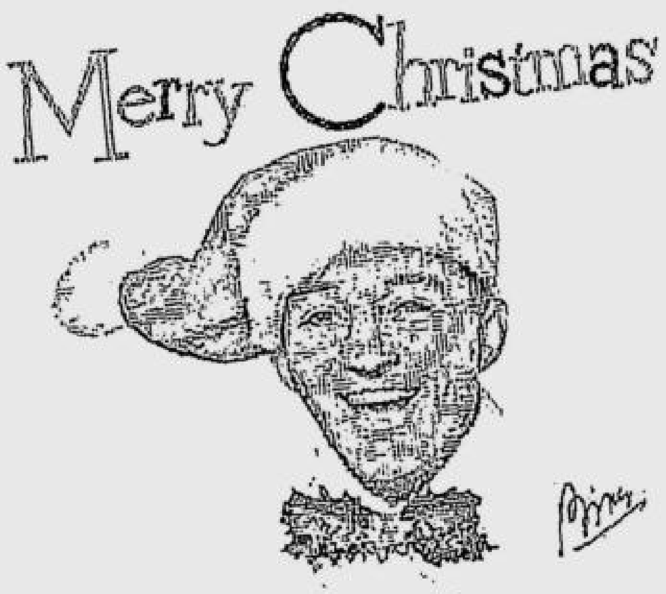
'WHITE CHRISTMAS'

Significance of the best-selling song of all time recalled

By Lilia Borlongan-Alvarez





BING CROSBY'S YULETIDE CAROL, "White Christmas," is regarded as the bestselling song of all time. It has sold more than 100 million copies worldwide and was acknowledged the bestselling single in any music category for more than 50 years—until Elton John's "Candle in the Wind" (the singer's tribute to the late Princess Diana) caught up with it in 1998.

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, "White Christmas" is also the bestselling record, surpassing sales of recordings by any non-rock performer. Ironically, the Christmas song was actually written by a Jew, Irving Berlin. He wrote it for the 1942 movie, "Holiday Inn," which starred Crosby and Fred Astaire. It was introduced to the public on a radio show on Dec. 25, 1941.

Lonely soldiers

Described as a song of peace and yearning, it was recorded by Crosby in 1942 and was released during World War II. The singer sang the tune before war-weary American troops—and it never failed to drive the lonely soldiers to tears! By the end of the war, it had become the bestselling single of all time.

There's an interesting story about the "role" of "White Christmas" in world history. Writer Steven Lewis says the song had the distinction of marking the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. "As the North Vietnamese surrounded Saigon, an evacuation plan was set into motion to bring the remaining American troops and some Vietnamese to safety," writes Lewis.

A radio broadcast of the song, followed by an announcement that the temperature in Saigon was 105 degrees, became the troops' cue to evacuate. "Bing's voice," Lewis recalls, "triggered a mad scramble for the US embassy, where helicopters were waiting!"

CROSBY. Became an icon for American values.

Romantic musical

The song's phenomenal success led to a movie with the same title, which was released in 1954 and grossed $30 million. Starring Crosby himself, the romantic musical follows two war veterans who become famous song-and-dance men.

Crosby's singing and acting career lasted for almost 50 years—from 1926 to his death in 1977. He is acknowledged as having done the most to boost the morale of American GIs during World War II. He was the first person to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Grammys.

Crosby, who's known for his "crooning" style, won an Academy Award in 1944. A devout Catholic, he became an icon for American values, especially after he was packaged as the epitome of an "easygoing guy who's also devoted as a husband and father!"

'Pinay' songwriting champ wears many hats

By Noelani Torre

EVEN IF YOU HAVE THE TALENT and the drive, making a name for yourself in the local music industry is never easy. There are many people out there who are after the same thing, and Pinoys are well-known for our musical talent.

"It is certainly difficult knowing that competition in our country is tight," muses Agatha, a singer/songwriter/producer who's been a part of the industry since she was a child. "For some reason, there's no basis for people's choices and appreciation for music."

That hasn't stopped her from trying, however, and since she's more than just a singer, Agatha is also making her mark as a songwriter. Having already written songs for herself, as well as for artists like Ogie Alcasid, Sarah Geronimo, Jolina Magdangal and Jennylyn Mercado, Agatha is becoming well-known for her songwriting talent.

Recognition

Recently, her songs gained recognition at the prestigious USA Songwriting Competition, an annual contest that's been ongoing since 1995 and prides itself on being "the world's leading songwriting event."

"I took a shot," Agatha recalls. "I had no expectations." Informed of the event by the Filipino Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (Filscap), she grabbed at the opportunity and submitted some of her songs. "It was a chance for people to believe in me," she explains, "and for us artists to sing our songs and be heard!"

Two of her songs qualified for the finals, trumping the achievement of other contestants from Asia. The judges of the USA Songwriting Competition make up a Blue Ribbon committee which includes distinguished producers and publishers from such major labels as Warner, Universal, Sony BMG and EMI. Known for helping composers and songwriters get a leg up in the competitive musical industry, this just might be the first rung up the ladder of Agatha's future success.

With many solo artists out there doing revivals and singing other people's songs, Agatha—as well as other artists like her—stands out. Blessed with a sweet, clear voice that falls lightly on the ear, she also has a way with words and music. Her songs are catchy, mellow, and contain refreshingly simple melodic lines and heartfelt lyrics.

Singing contests

Like many young hopefuls, Agatha Comia Obar entered singing contests as a child. She was a "Bulilit Bagong Kampion" runner-up and won the "Tanghalan ng Kampeon" tilt eight weeks in a row! She also passed the audition for the role of Kim in the German production of "Miss Saigon."

OBAR. Two of her songs qualified for the finals of the USA songwriting competition.

The singer-composer has performed with groups like Silk, Pido, Slim and Livewood. What really make her distinctive, however, are the many hats she wears. Not only does she write her own lyrics and compose her own music, she's also a producer for GMA and Viva Records.

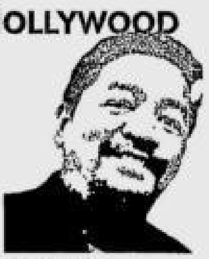
An artist of many talents, Agatha is currently working on a new album. When asked what she thought it would take to make it big in the music biz, her answer is simple: "Just keep going!"

SATURDAY Special

DENZEL Washington topbills true-to-life drama, "The Great Debaters."

Oprah Winfrey planning film version of stage musical, 'The Color Purple'

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD



Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—We continue our article about our recent interview with Oprah Winfrey, who also announced that, yes, she is planning to produce a film adaptation of the musical version of "The Color Purple."

When Denzel Washington, who sat down with Oprah at the press con to promote their movie, "The Great Debaters" (he stars and directs; she coproduces), heard Oprah's plan, the award-winning actor's comic instinct quickly took over—Washington sang, pretending to audition, so he could be cast in the musical film. To hearty laugher, he sang: "Mi mi mi mi mi…!"

"Now, *that's* comedy!," Denzel joked. What isn't a comedy is "The Great Debaters," an inspiring drama in which he plays real-life professor, Melvin B. Tolson, who coached the debating team of a small African-American college in Texas into national prominence—which was no small feat in the 1930s!

Racist attitude

Tolson's story was fictionalized for the screen, but Denzel deftly shows the racist attitude that dominated the era, including scenes of lynching and of Forest Whitaker's character encountering white farmers.

Oprah answered questions effortlessly. She often used her hands to drive a point. It has been a stressful time for the TV host: She recently flew to Africa to resolve the allegations of sexual abuse that rocked the girls' school she opened to much fanfare early this year. Then, she has to help promote "The Great Debaters."

In the next few months, she will be busy campaigning for Democratic presidential contender, Barack Obama. She said she was looking forward to spending a few days at her mansion in Santa Barbara after the press con.

Campaign trail

Oprah shared, "I'll stay in Santa Barbara for two days, before I take the campaign trail. I just came from Africa and got the last child on the bus, to make sure that those kids will be alright for the summer—to get psychological help and therapy for them.

"The month has been stressful for me. I'm like, 'Ay yay yay! How do I turn it off?!' So, I'll go home, where my dogs are waiting for me. I'm going to read up on Barack's policies before I hit the trail." Excerpts:

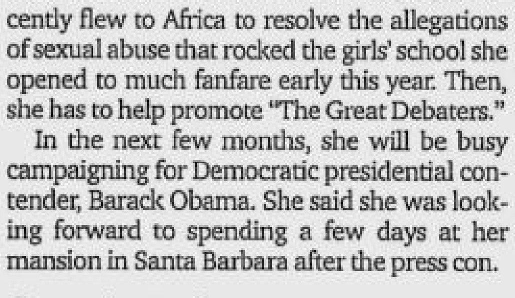
Do you think racism can be cured?

I do think so, but I don't think we can cure it in our lifetime. It's an ongoing process for people to open their hearts and recognize that we're more alike than different. When you have people in power who have not been exposed to diversity, it's very easy for them to feel superior to others.

How can this film be an instrument for change?

I watched the film with my partner, Steadman. In the scene involving Forest Whitaker and the pig, Steadman was so moved to see Forest say, "Yes, sir!," and by what it took for a black man to say it and still remain a man who

OPRAH/ M3



WASHINGTON and Winfrey with the author (center).

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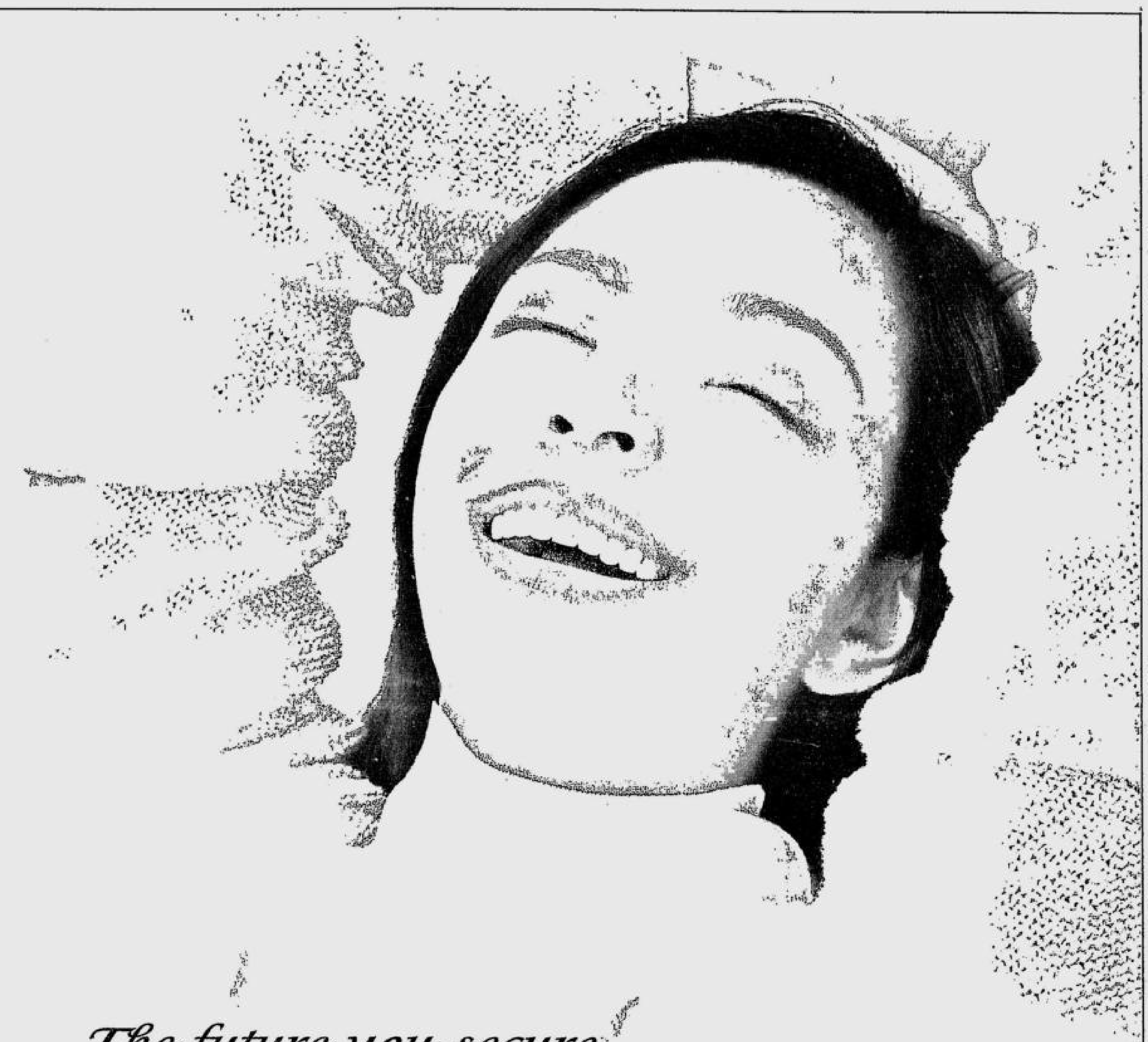

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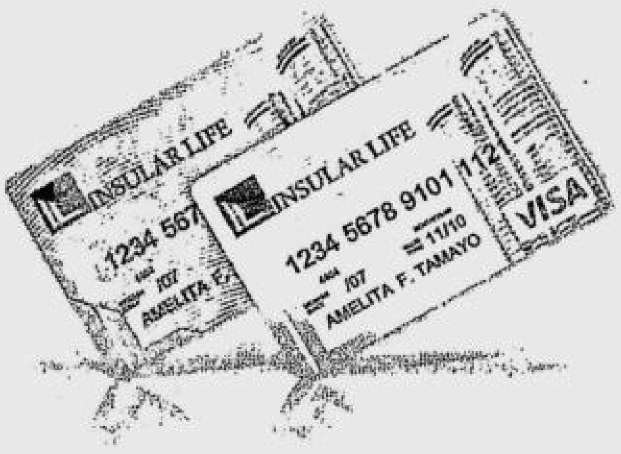

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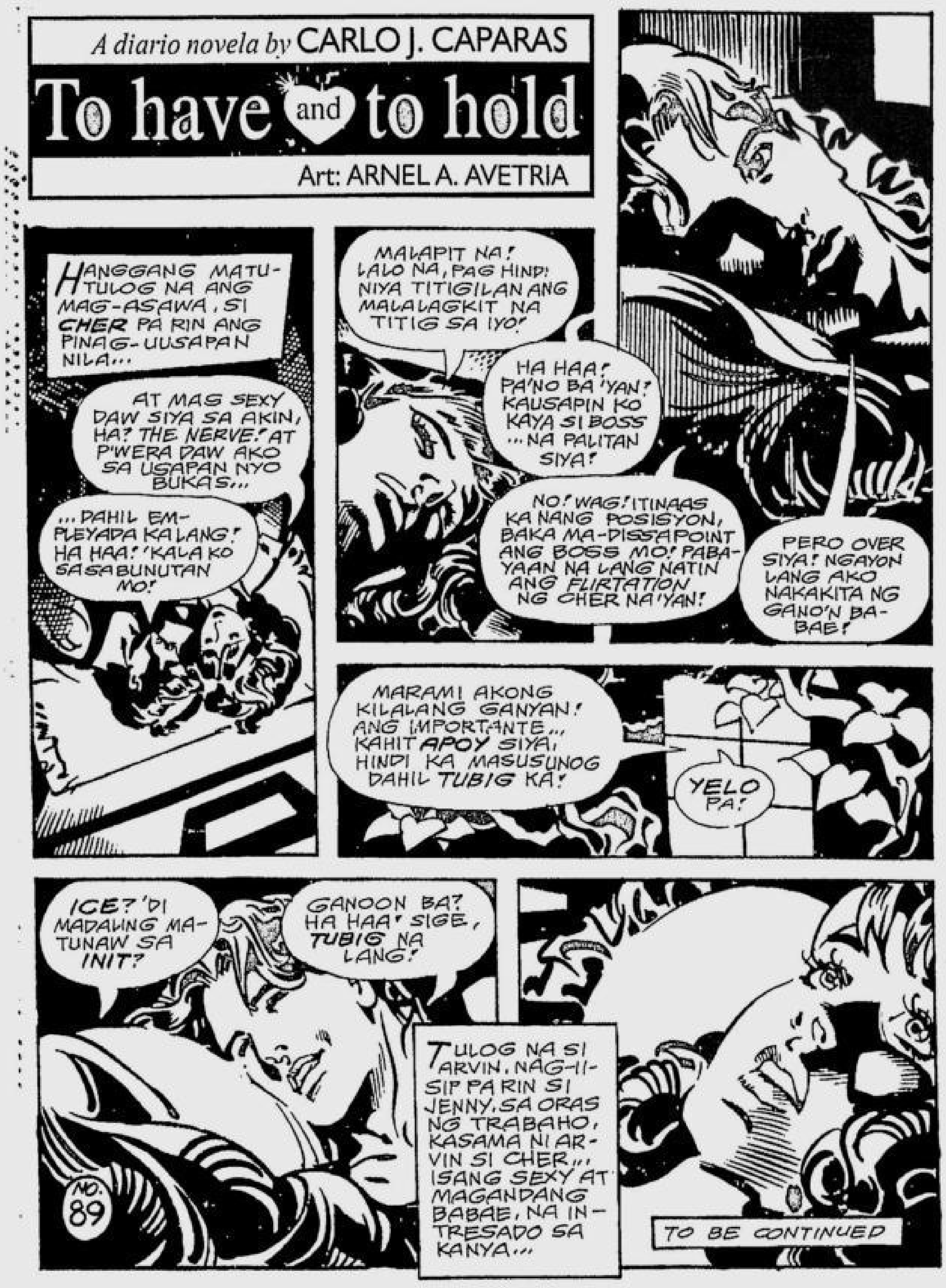
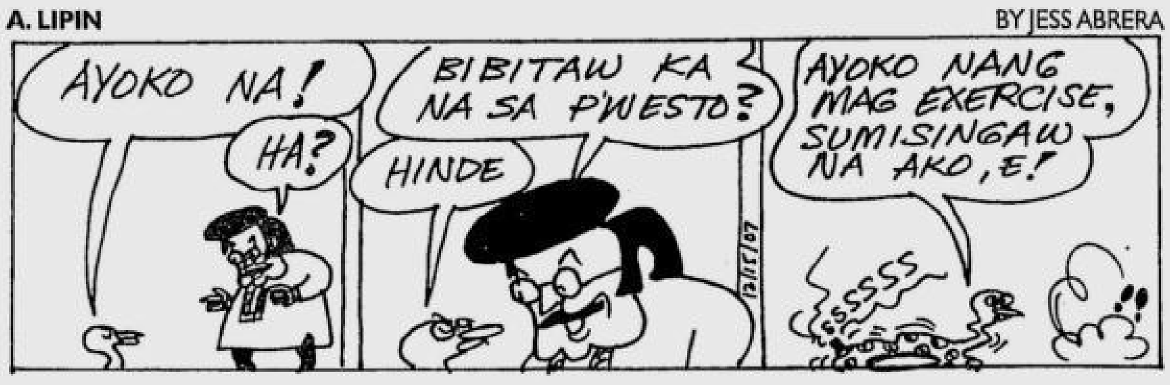
Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA


HANGGANG MATULOG NA ANG MAG-ASAWA, SI CHER PA RIN ANG PINAG-UUSAPAN NILA...
AT MAS SEXY DAW SIYA SA AKIN, HA? THE NERVE! AT P'WERA DAW AKO SA USAPAN NYO BUKAS...
...DAHIL EMPLEYADA KA LANG! HA HAA! 'KALA KO SASABUNUTAN MO!
MALAPIT NA! LALO NA, PAG HINDI NIYA TITIGILAN ANG MALALAGKIT NA TITIG SA IYO!
HA HAA! PA'NO BA 'YAN? KAUSAPIN KO KAYA SI BOSS ...NA PALITAN SIYA!
NO! WAG! ITINAAS KA NANG POSISYON, BAKA MA-DISSAPOINT ANG BOSS MO! PABAYAAN NA LANG NATIN ANG FLIRTATION NG CHER NA'YAN!
PERO OVER SIYA! NGAYON LANG AKO NAKAKITA NG GANO'N BABAE!
MARAMI AKONG KILALANG GANYAN! ANG IMPORTANTE... KAHIT APOY SIYA, HINDI KA MASUSUNOG DAHIL TUBIG KA!
YELO PA!
ICE? 'DI MADALING MATUNAW SA INIT?
GANOON BA? HA HAA! SIGE, TUBIG NA LANG!
TULOG NA SI ARVIN. NAG-IISIP PA RIN SI JENNY, SA ORAS NG TRABAHO, KASAMA NI ARVIN SI CHER... ISANG SEXY AT MAGANDANG BABAE, NA INTRESADO SA KANYA...
NO. 89
TO BE CONTINUED

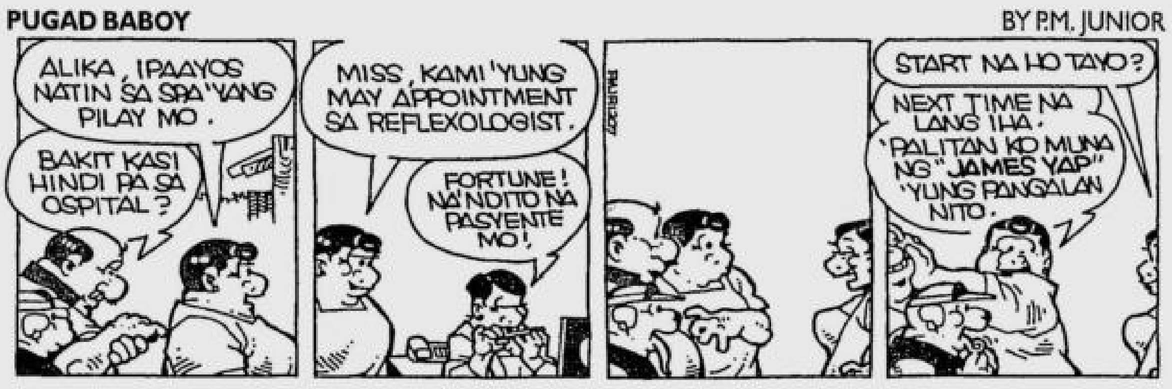
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


AYOKO NA!
HA?
BIBITAW KA NA SA P'WESTO?
HINDE
12/15/07
AYOKO NANG MAG EXERCISE, SUMISINGAW NA AKO, E!
SSSSS

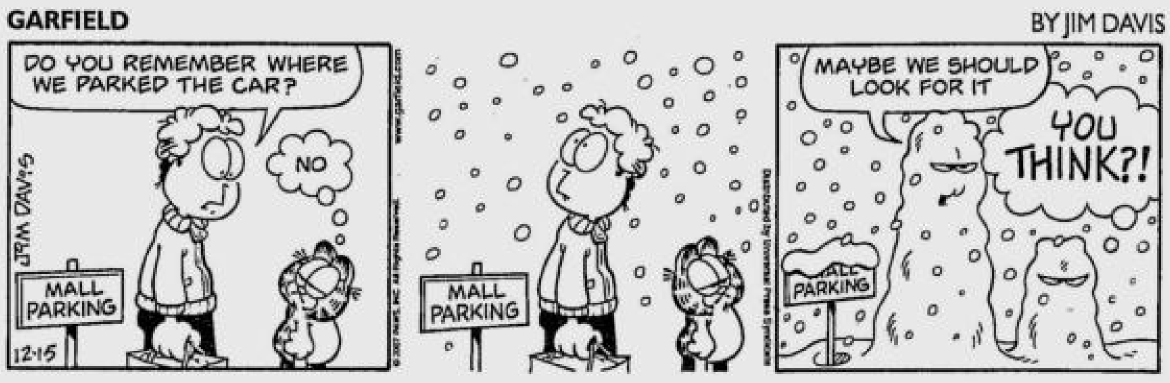
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ALIKA, IPAAYOS NATIN SA SPA 'YANG PILAY MO.
BAKIT KASI HINDI PA SA OSPITAL?
MISS, KAMI 'YUNG MAY APPOINTMENT SA REFLEXOLOGIST.
FORTUNE! NA'NDITO NA PASYENTE MO!
START NA HO TAYO?
NEXT TIME NA LANG IHA. 'PALITAN KO MUNA NG "JAMES YAP" 'YUNG PANGALAN NITO.

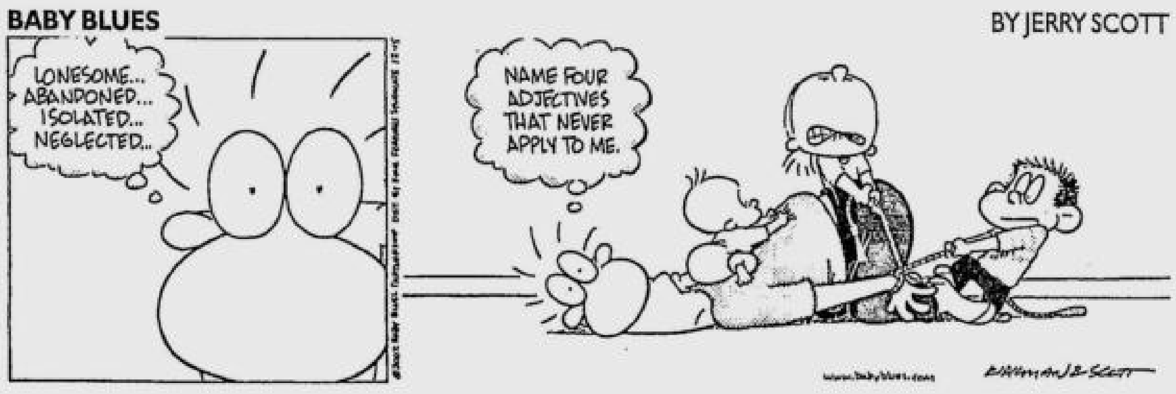
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


DO YOU REMEMBER WHERE WE PARKED THE CAR?
NO
MALL PARKING
JIM DAVIS
12-15
MALL PARKING
MAYBE WE SHOULD LOOK FOR IT
YOU THINK?!
MALL PARKING

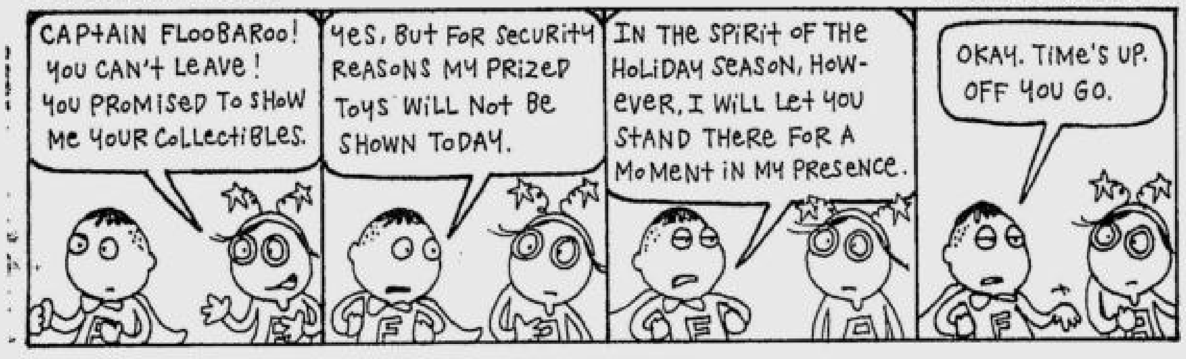
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


LONESOME... ABANDONED... ISOLATED... NEGLECTED...
NAME FOUR ADJECTIVES THAT NEVER APPLY TO ME.

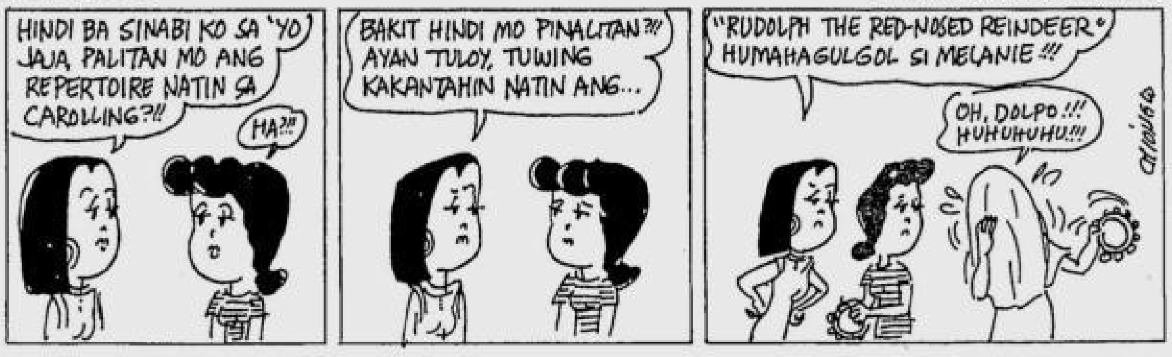
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


CAPTAIN FLOOBAROO! YOU CAN'T LEAVE! YOU PROMISED TO SHOW ME YOUR COLLECTIBLES.
YES, BUT FOR SECURITY REASONS MY PRIZED TOYS WILL NOT BE SHOWN TODAY.
IN THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON, HOWEVER, I WILL LET YOU STAND THERE FOR A MOMENT IN MY PRESENCE.
OKAY. TIME'S UP. OFF YOU GO.

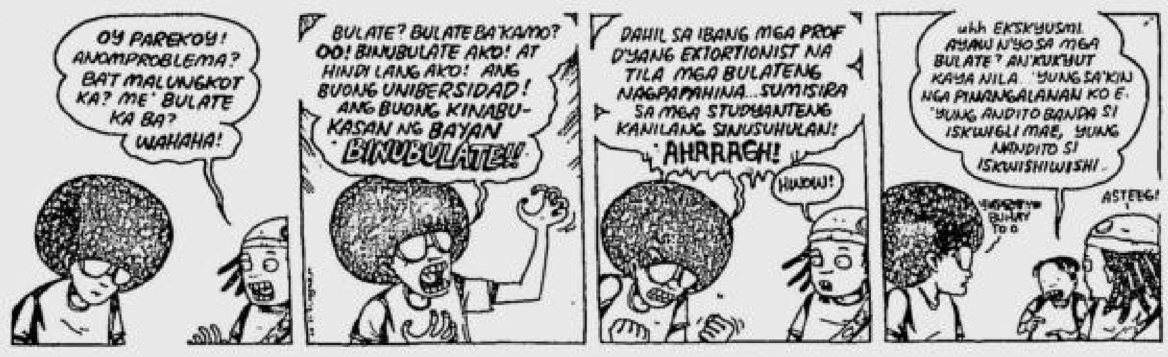
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HINDI BA SINABI KO SA 'YO JAJA PALITAN MO ANG REPERTOIRE NATIN SA CAROLLING?!!
HA?!!
BAKIT HINDI MO PINALITAN?!! AYAN TULOY, TUWING KAKANTAHIN NATIN ANG...
"RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER" HUMAHAGULGOL SI MELANIE!!!
OH, DOLPO!!! HUHUHUHU!!!
CHIONGLO

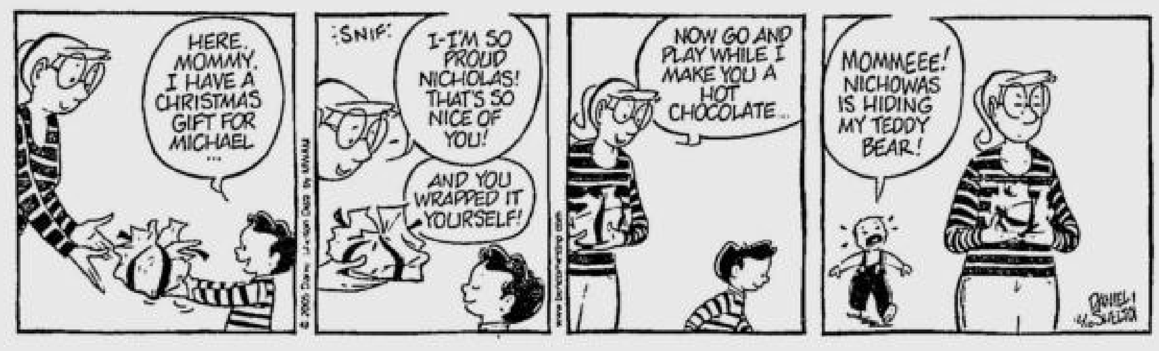
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

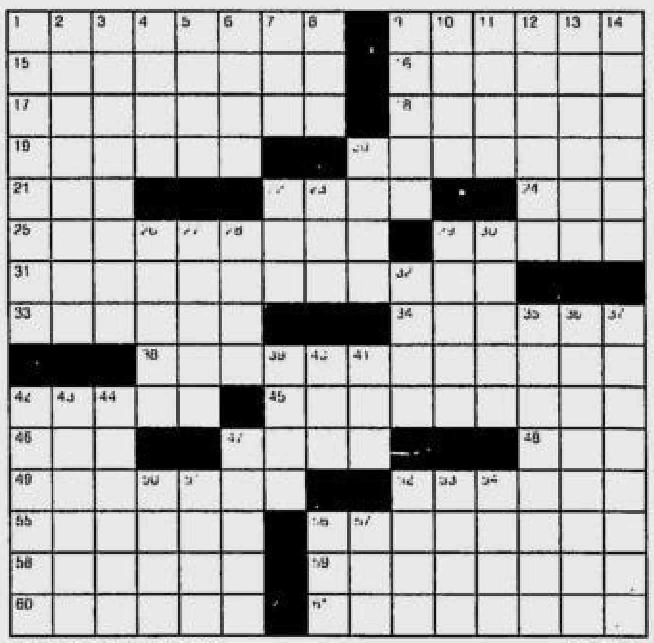

OY PAREKOY! ANONG PROBLEMA? BAT MALUNGKOT KA? ME' BULATE KA BA? WAHAHA!
BULATE? BULATE BA KAMO? OO! BINUBULATE AKO! AT HINDI LANG AKO! ANG BUONG UNIBERSIDAD! ANG BUONG KINABUKASAN NG BAYAN BINUBULATE!!
DAHIL SA IBANG MGA PROF D'YANG EXTORTIONIST NA TILA MGA BULATENG NAGPAPAHINA...SUMISIRA SA MGA STUDYANTENG KANILANG SINUSUHULAN!
AHRRAGH!
HUDOW!
uhh EKSKYUSMI. AYAW N'YO SA MGA BULATE? AN'KUKYUT KAYA NILA. 'YUNG SA'KIN NGA PINANGALANAN KO E. 'YUNG ANDITO BANDA SI ISKWIGLI MAE, YUNG NANDITO SI ISKWISHIWISHI...
ASTEEG!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HERE, MOMMY. I HAVE A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR MICHAEL...
SNIF
I-I'M SO PROUD NICHOLAS! THAT'S SO NICE OF YOU!
AND YOU WRAPPED IT YOURSELF!
NOW GO AND PLAY WHILE I MAKE YOU A HOT CHOCOLATE...
MOMMEEE! NICHOWAS IS HIDING MY TEDDY BEAR!
DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Annabel Michaels
Williamsburg, VA

12/15/07

ACROSS
1 Crossword board game
9 Make shoe repairs
15 Minnesota Fats milieu
16 "__ Fideles"
17 Surgically inserted items
18 Seamless cinematic transitions
19 Process for sorting the injured
20 Living dead
21 Sports enthusiast
22 Star of "Misery"
24 Chemical suffix
25 Utopians
29 Conger catcher
31 With due honors
33 Ancient Jewish mystic
34 More ethereal
38 Positron, e.g.
42 Slightly adhesive
45 Lady killer?
46 Business bigwig
47 Mr. Ruth
48 U.S. voter
49 Wearing away
52 Hawaiian wizard
55 Taste
56 In support of workers
58 Entertainer Kazan
59 Say again
60 Like icy rain
61 Abstracts

DOWN
1 Quick-tempered one
2 Fellow members
3 Sticky, stringy state
4 Actress Nazimova
5 Toot one's own horn
6 Skeleton piece
7 Parcel of land
8 Printer's measures
9 Actor Novarro
10 Dead Sea kingdom
11 Seasoning plant
12 Discovery
13 Sweet-smelling gas
14 Smaller
20 Actress Pitts
22 Chicago hrs.
23 Booze, butts and bullets bureau
26 Like raised oars
27 Comic Bruce
28 "Rhyme Pays" rapper
29 Privileged few
30 Icelandic cash
32 Animal fat
35 Frozen blocks
36 Hamlet's castle
37 Begins again
39 Somali supermodel
40 Tavern by a tube station
41 Exist
42 Foreign antigens identifiers
43 Antenna
44 Ginger snap or macaroon
47 Above-par score
50 Trig function
51 1st letter
52 Zen paradox
53 Plus
54 Padlock holder
56 Vb. tense
57 Marina del __

Friday's Puzzle Solved

B	L	O	G	■	A	R	B	O	R	■	A	R	T	Y
Y	O	G	A	■	R	E	L	A	Y	■	C	O	R	E
T	O	L	D	I	T	L	I	K	E	I	T	W	A	S
E	K	E	■	R	E	A	P	■	■	N	I	E	C	E
■	■	■	M	A	R	X	■	E	S	C	O	R	T	S
M	U	T	I	N	Y	■	P	A	E	A	N	■	■	■
I	R	O	N	■	■	S	O	R	T	S	■	W	I	Z
L	A	I	D	I	T	O	N	T	H	E	L	I	N	E
E	L	L	■	C	I	N	C	H	■	■	A	R	C	S
■	■	■	S	I	E	G	E	■	C	A	V	E	A	T
P	A	T	T	E	R	S	■	T	U	N	A	■	■	■
A	L	I	A	S	■	■	K	A	T	E	■	F	E	E
D	I	D	N	T	M	I	N	C	E	W	O	R	D	S
R	E	E	D	■	B	O	O	K	S	■	D	E	E	P
E	N	D	S	■	A	N	T	S	Y	■	D	E	N	Y

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12/15/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You definitely think big. You have a natural feeling for power. In large measure, this is because you are an optimist, and you're also well-liked. You know how to make others feel good, and you believe in your own positive future. Your year ahead is exciting because it's the beginning of a new cycle for you. Open any door.

Birthdate of: Adam Brody, actor; J. Paul Getty, oil tycoon; Garrett Wang, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Some kind of secret intrigues you today. You want to know more about something or about what someone else is doing. (There's a good chance you'll succeed!)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): An enthusiastic friend or acquaintance is keen to convince you to do something. You can have a rousing, fun time pursuing physical activities or sports with others today.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel more daring than usual today. Because of this, others definitely notice you. But you don't mind because you're confident and pleased with yourself.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Travel somewhere if you can today. Do something different. You're eager to learn something new. Dull routine is definitely not for you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're ready to defend your turf today. You feel quite protective about anything that you share with anyone else. You're prepared to remove all doubts about the matter.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Someone (probably a female friend or partner) will try to convince you of their point of view today. This person is so confident that you feel like you are being coerced!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're interested in health matters today. You want to figure out ways to feel better and look better. You're open to advice because you need encouragement.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a fun, playful, energetic day. All sporting activities will go well. You have lots of energy to pursue whatever it is you want—be it romance, working with children or exploring the arts.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Enthusiastic discussions with family members, especially parents, will please you. You will happily put yourself out for family members today. You feel like you have lots of energy.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're extremely persuasive today. Go after whatever you want. People won't be able to resist your winning style. This is a good day for teaching, acting, selling, marketing or explaining anything to anyone.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Write down your moneymaking ideas. You're on the ball! Think of ways to boost your earnings. Some of you will have fun shopping today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): The Moon is in your sign, making a strong aspect to fiery Mars. This makes you feel energized, emotional and ready for anything.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis SudoKu

By Dave Green

		1	4	6	9	3		
	7			8			1	
	6						9	
				5				
3		2				4		8
				4				
	1						5	
	9			1			7	
		6	5	2	7	9		

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Difficulty Level ★★★★

12/15

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	6	2	4	7	9	5	3	8
5	4	7	1	8	3	9	6	2
9	8	3	2	6	5	1	4	7
4	1	6	7	9	2	8	5	3
8	2	9	3	5	4	7	1	6
7	3	5	8	1	6	4	2	9
6	9	1	5	2	7	3	8	4
2	5	4	9	3	8	6	7	1
3	7	8	6	4	1	2	9	5

Difficulty Level ★★★★

12/14

Oprah Winfrey planning film version of stage musical…

From page M1

keeps his dignity! To see the heart and spirit of that scene, that's how the movie changes its viewers. One movie, one lecture, or one book at a time…

"THE GREAT DEBATERS." Dramatizes African-American debating students' rise to national prominence in the 1930s.

Greatest competitor

Looking back to when you started, aren't you surprised to see where you are now?

It's no small thing to do a show every day. When I look back, I can't even believe I've been doing it for 22 years! My greatest competitor is myself. I'm always trying to stay ahead of myself, trying to come up with new ways to do the show, and moving to the next level. I've been more focused on that than on whom I'm influencing, or how other people are responding to it.

I certainly know that my show has opened opportunities for other shows, most of which failed because people were trying to replicate the model. Since I was the model, it's hard for people to replicate who or what they're not!

What was the most significant change in you since you began your TV career?

When I first started on TV, I was trying to imitate Barbara Walters. One day. I made a huge mistake on the air and started laughing. I took myself out of the Barbara-pretend mode and realized that I could be a better Oprah than a make-believe Barbara. So, over the years, I feel blessed to have been paid very well for being myself! Being authentic on the air has worked for me.

Open mind

How do you manage to keep an open mind?

The thing about my show is that, I try to be open to the pros and cons. But, what I really do is try to use myself as a vessel—go in there without making any judgment, because I interview a lot of strange people.

Sometimes, I interview people who have not done positive things in the world. So, in order to validate and hear them, I try to be open to whatever it is they're saying, so I don't walk in with prejudgments.

I've been in serious interviews where my way of thinking was turned around. Many years ago, I interviewed a group of women in Texas who were imprisoned for murdering their children.

To walk into a situation where you have to try to find the humanity in somebody who has done that, you have to listen to their words in such a way that there's no judgment, and I'm still able to ask vital questions. I learned to open up to the story.

Obviously, words are important to you.

In the beginning was the word, so I am a lover of words. That's why I love books so much—I just love the written word! I love reading poetry out loud, because it's like spoon-feeding yourself with words.

Voice

There's nothing more important than being able to use your voice to validate yourself and other people. They make the common bond in the human experience.

Everybody wants to be validated—that's what I've learned in my 22 years of interviewing people on a daily basis. Everybody wants his words to be heard. It doesn't matter if it's your wife, your 2-year-old child, your boss, or the guy at the gas station you're in conflict with. They want to know if you hear them—and if what they say matters. Words represent your spoken voice and your spirit!

Do you believe vicious words can hurt more than physical abuse?

Emotional abuse is far more devastating that physical abuse—because, if it's physical, at least you can say, the reason why I'm hurting is because he hit me.

When somebody puts you down, demeans or violates you with words, you never forget it! I can forget the whippings that my grandmother gave me. But, a man will never forget if somebody humiliates him with words!

E-mail rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com, and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

WHITAKER (WITH WASHINGTON, RIGHT). Figures in a moving scene with white farmers.

"CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON." Producers want to duplicate the box-office success of Ang Lee's action epic.

Hollywood financiers focus lens on Asian movies

SINGAPORE—HOPING TO BANKROLL the next "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," international financiers recently said they will pump millions of dollars into the Asian film industry to ride the region's growing consumer wealth.

Ashok Amritraj, chief executive of Hyde Park Entertainment, a Hollywood firm that produced movie hits such as "Bringing Down the House" and "Raising Helen," announced it is investing millions into film projects in India, South Korea, Japan and Singapore.

"This is Asia's time. Over the next 10 years, both economically and from an entertainment standpoint, the change will be dramatic," he told reporters at the Asia Media Festival in Singapore. Amritraj said Hyde Park's Asian projects will be announced in the first quarter next year.

Fast growth

The fast growth of the Asian film market may see it outstrip the market in the United States by 2020, opines Edward Pressman, chief executive of Edward R. Pressman Film Corp.

"The fact that the agencies are here in Asia and major studios are building infrastructure in this part of the world are clear indications of the region's importance," adds Pressman, an acclaimed Hollywood producer who gave Arnold Schwarzenegger his first starring role in "Conan the Barbarian."

The total revenues from China's radio, television and film industry surged 18 percent to about $15 billion last year, according to government data. Pressman said the presence of top talent agency, William Morris, in Shanghai is testament to Hollywood's attraction to Asia.

Distribution rights

Film financing provides an opportunity for investors to get exposure to films, and to secure profits from "presales"—selling the distribution rights before the film is even produced.

Over the last few years, Asian horror movies such as Japan's "The Ring" and the Singapore-Hong Kong coproduction, "The Eye," have been successfully remade for Western audiences.

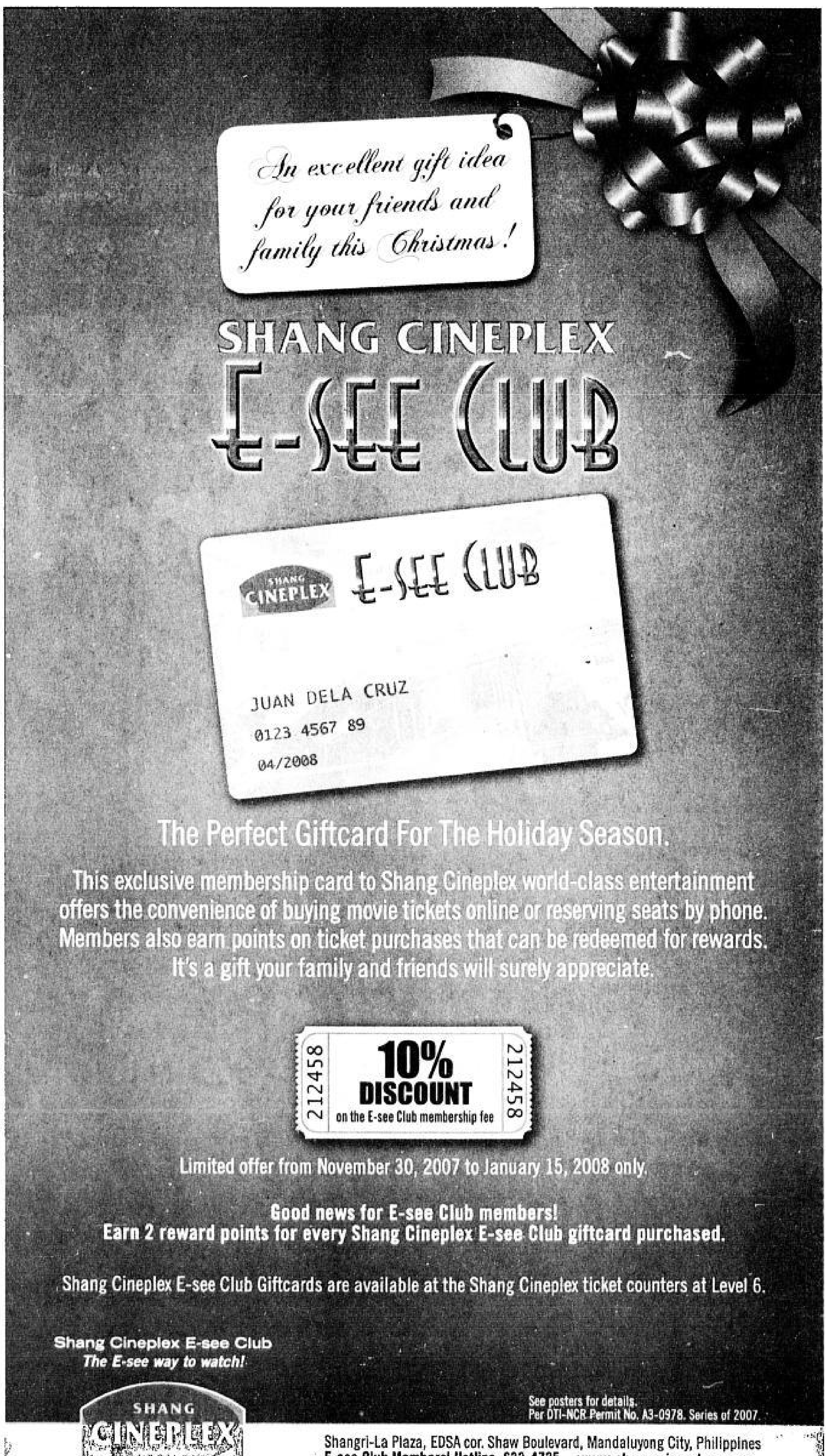
NAOMI Watts topbills the American remake of "The Ring."

"The directors were probably watching American movies and then, they translated those stories into their own versions—which is why these films work so well," reasons Cassian Elwes, senior vice president of William Morris Independent.

Ticket sales

Ang Lee's blockbuster, "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," won an Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 2000. But, India has never won the Oscar in that category, despite having the world's biggest film industry in terms of ticket sales.

Amritraj muses: "This part of the world is at a crossroads. You are taking a local industry—whether it's the film industry of India, South Korea, Singapore or Japan—and broadening it out to a global audience!" *Reuters*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Top luminaries in new starrers

HEIGL is "always a bridesmaid, never a bride" in the rom-com, "27 Dresses."

By Nestor U. Torre

KEANU REEVES TOPBILLS "**THE Day the Earth Stood Still,**" a remake of the 1951 sci-fi classic about an alien and his robot who come to earth in a saucer-shaped spacecraft.

He warns the planet's leaders not to take their conflicts into space—or else they will face devastating consequences!

Perfect disguise

For his part, Eddie Murphy has come up with something of a kooky companion piece, "**Starship Dave,**" about a team of tiny aliens who try to save their planet from destruction. Seeking a way to save their doomed world, they arrive on earth in the perfect disguise—a spaceship shaped like a human being (Murphy)!

Tom Cruise heads an international cast in "**Valkyrie**" as an aristocratic German officer who leads an attempt to bring down the Nazi regime and end the war by planting a bomb in Hitler's bunker. Also starring are Kenneth Branagh and Terrence Stamp.

CAGE. Reprises role in "National Treasures: Book of Secrets."

BEN and Casey Affleck collaborate on acclaimed thriller, "Gone Baby Gone," as director and star, respectively.

In "**National Treasure: Book of Secrets,**" Nicolas Cage plays a historian and archaeologist who sets out to prove the innocence of his great-great grandfather, who's implicated as a key conspirator in the death of Abraham Lincoln when a missing page from the diary of John Wilkes Booth surfaces.

Ben Affleck directs younger brother, Casey in "**Gone Baby Gone**" a critically-acclaimed thriller about two private detectives hunting for a 4-year-old girl in Boston's underworld.

On his own, Casey Affleck goes on to costar with Brad Pitt in "**The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford,**" where he plays the plum role of the notorious outlaw's killer.

Acclaimed

Keira Knightley's new film is similarly acclaimed—"**Atonement,**" from the makers of "Pride and Prejudice." The period drama is a classic British romance that spans several decades—but, with an edgy twist thrown in for good measure:

Fledgling writer Briony Tallis changes the course of several lives when she accuses her older sister's lover (James McAvoy) of a crime he did not commit.

Strangers

"**What Happens in Vegas**" is a romantic comedy starring Cameron Diaz and Ashton Kutcher as two strangers who indulge in a night of debauchery in Sin City—and wake up the next morning to discover to their horror that—they've gotten married!

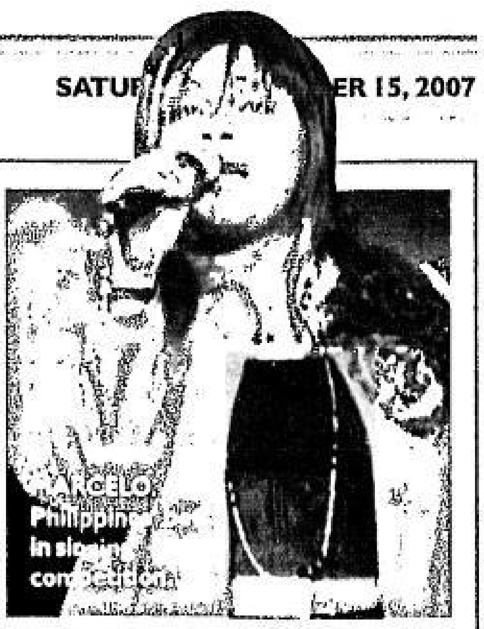
To spice up the plot even more, they also learn that one of them has won a huge jackpot after playing the other's quarter!

Will Smith plays "the last man in the world" (after a massive viral attack on the planet) in "**I Am Legend.**"

The beautiful and talented Katherine Heigl plays the "always a bridesmaid, never a bride" female lead in the breezy romantic comedy, "**27 Dresses.**" Her problem is, she falls in love with her sister's fiance (Ed Burns), but has to plan their wedding!

Finally, Jerry Seinfeld makes his show biz comeback as the voice of Barry B. Benson, the lead character in the hit animated feature, "**Bee Movie,**" which he also executive-produced.

SMITH. Plays "the last man in the world" in sci-fi actioner, "I Am Legend."



Mau Marcelo competes on 'Asian Idol'

RP BET MAU MARCELO IS COMPETING in the "Asian Idol" tilt in Jakarta, Indonesia tonight. (It's being telecast at 8 p.m. on ABC-5.)

Want to boost her chances of winning? Comply with the regional singing tilt's voting mechanics:

1. Each voter in every country has to vote for two idols within each SMS.
2. The voter cannot vote for the same Idol twice in the same SMS.
3. Unlimited voting. Texster can vote as many times as he wishes.
4. The Philippines' voting syntax: Type VOTE<space><Country 1><space><Country 2> send to 2959 for all telcos (Globe, Smart, Sun)
5. Participating countries and their respective contestants and keywords:

Philippines Mau Marcelo = PHIL
Vietnam Phu'o'ng Vy = VIET
Indonesia Mike Mohede = INDO
Singapore Hady Mirza = SIN
Malaysia Jaclyn Victor = MAL
India Abhijeet Sawant = INDIA

Sample vote: To vote for Mau of the Philippines and Hady of Singapore, type: VOTE PHIL SIN send to 2959 for all telcos. P2.50 for Globe and Smart subscribers, P2 for Sun subscribers.

Voting starts once the signal is given on performance night tonight. Voting is open until tomorrow, Dec. 16, 11:30 p.m. and closes thereafter.

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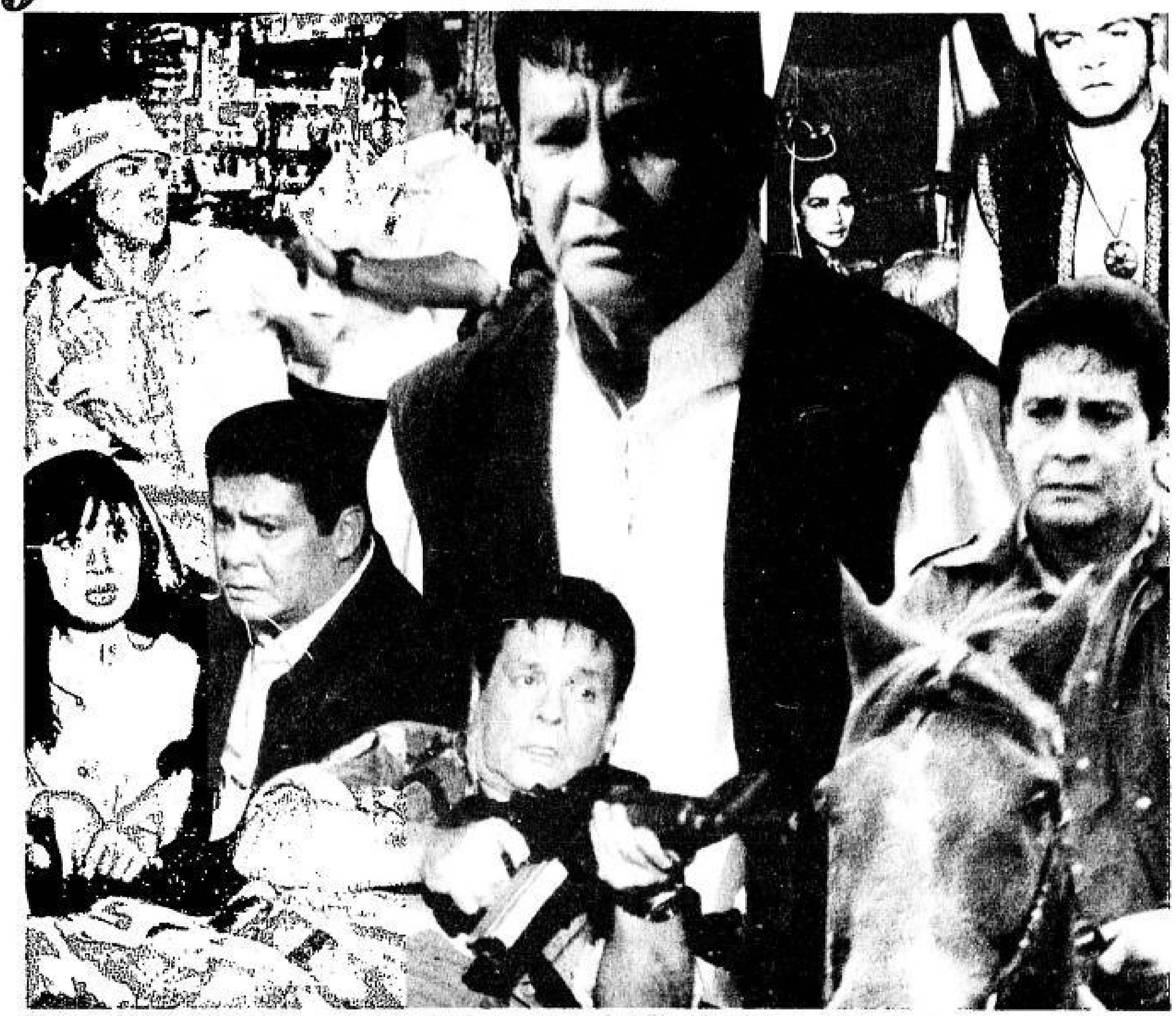
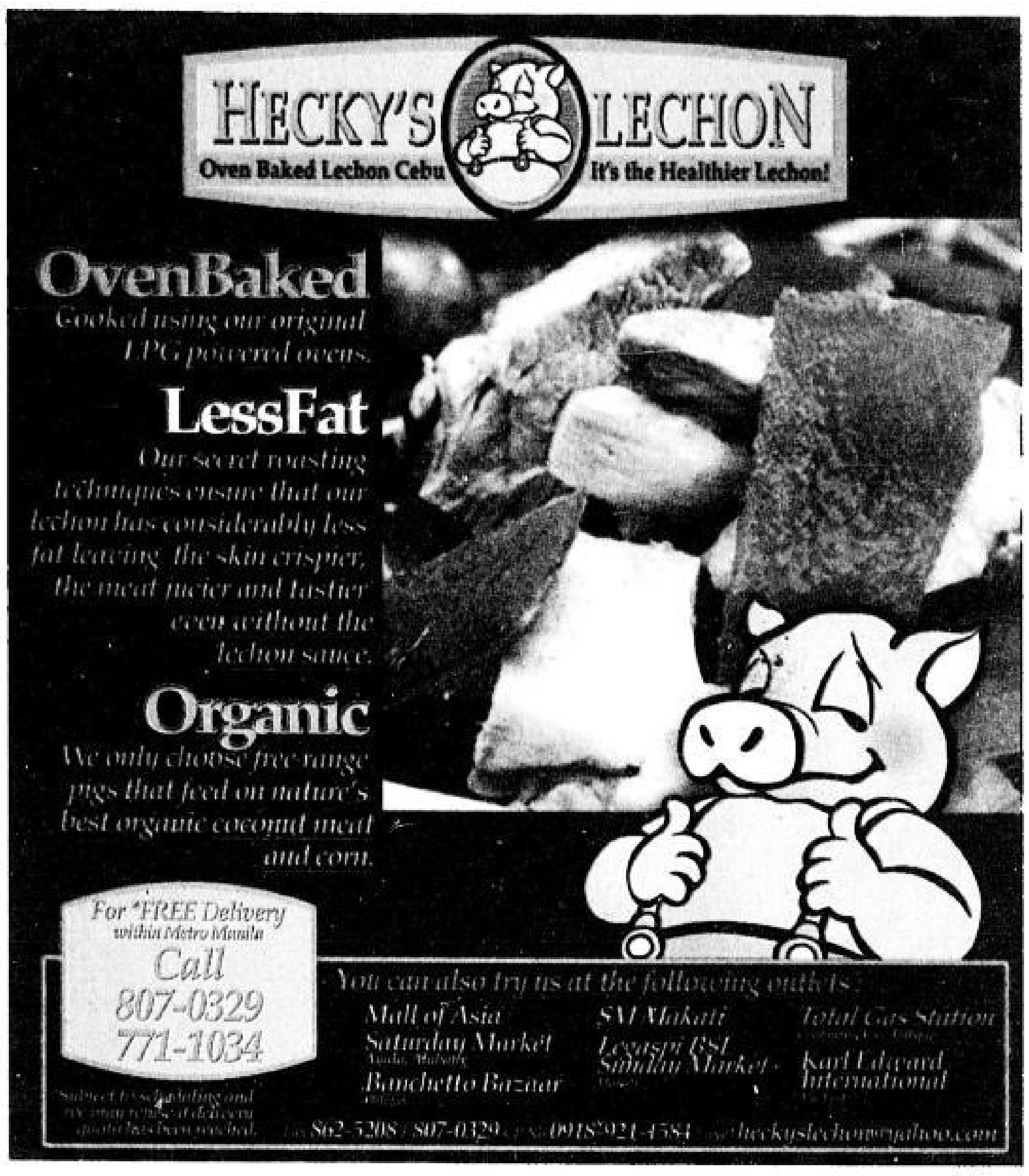


FPJ loved his movies' viewers so much that he devoted more than 50 years of his life to entertaining and inspiring them.



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By Nestor U. Torre

LAST SUNDAY NIGHT, WE stayed up beyond our bedtime to catch Channel 2's FPJ special, which culminated in the music video which the late movie king and presidential candidate personally worked on before his untimely demise.

While the tribute to FPJ pretty much went through familiar territory, we found the extended music video a special treat, not only because it bore the stamp of the late filmmaker-actor's love for his craft and his audience, but also because it recalled some generally forgotten aspects of Fernando Poe Jr.'s five-decade career as larger-than-life icon on the silver screen *and* on the national scene.

Luminous recollections

Those luminous recollections were made possible by FPJ's other key interest in the preservation of his film company's products. While most other producers paid no heed to the future, he carefully archived his films' negatives, so that future generations could still enjoy them—as they're doing now.

That's why we've been urging the movie industry to set up a national archive and name it after FPJ, so that Filipino movies can be for *all* Filipinos—yesterday, today and *tomorrow.*

On the less serious side, FPJ's extended music video of many of his starrers reminded us of the wide range of leading ladies he had—from Judy Ann Santos to Armida Siguion-Reyna! Ronnie Poe must have smiled a lot as he was editing the long music video.

Imagine doing love scenes with frisky female stars young enough to be his—granddaughters! Ah, the movies are a world of fantasy and wish-fulfillment, indeed.

Extended music video

Since the special production was an extended music video, it underscored the fact that FPJ loved to sing. It turns out that he did so in quite a large number of his movies—his soft baritone intoning not just love songs, but children's songs, as well, when he costarred with the then juvenile likes of Niño Muhlach.

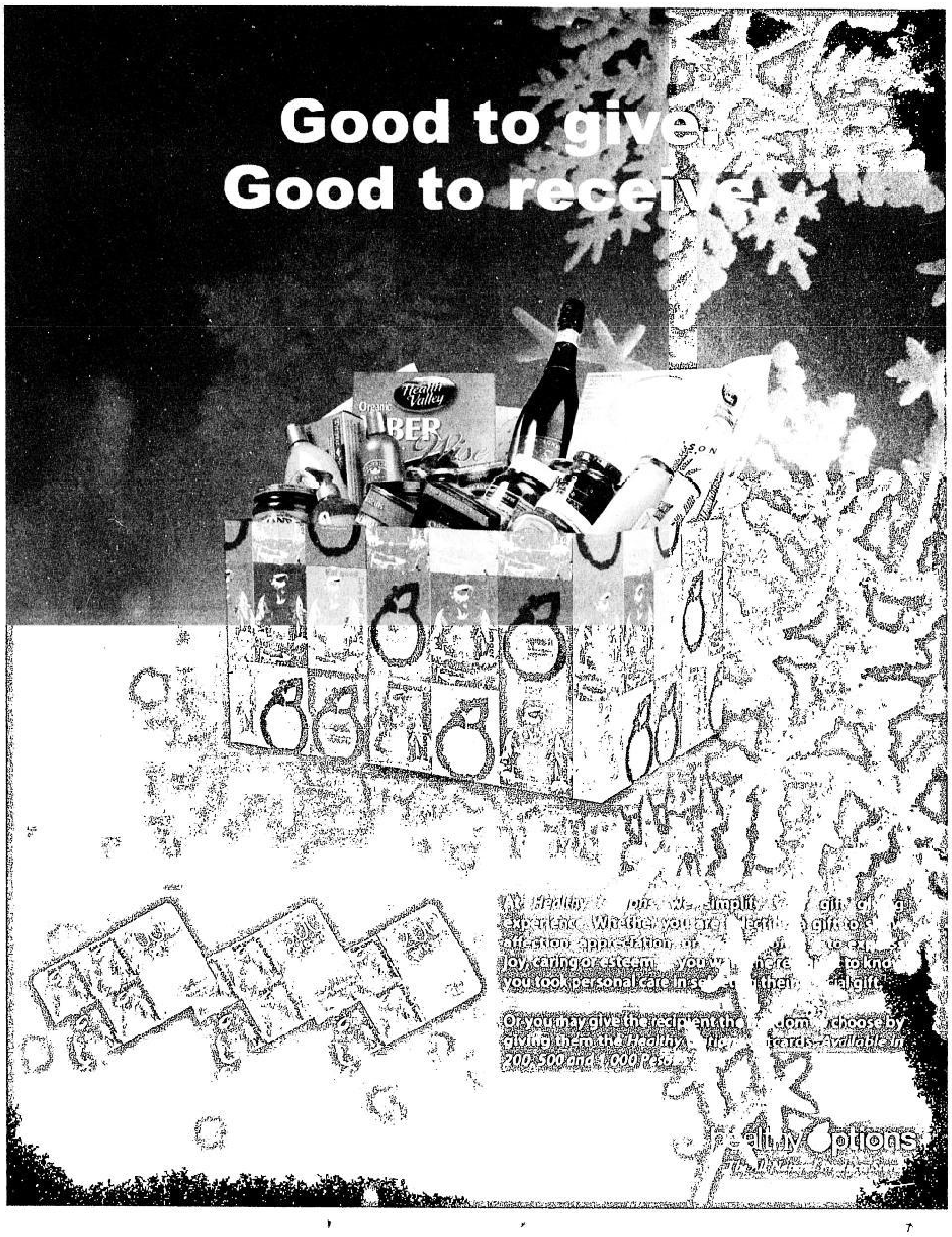
But, the long music video gave the greatest importance to Ronnie's movies with Susan Roces. In excerpt after excerpt, the reel and real-life couple showed the rapport that served them well through the more than the 30 years they were together, their special bond firming up and deepening as the years passed.

To this day, Susan hasn't lost her strong identity as woman and star, but she has also gained a parallel identity as FPJ's professional partner, wife, widow—and then some.

Scenarios

That "and then some" is what both perplexes and excites some political king- and queen-makers these days—but, such intimations of future national involvement and "carrying on the torch" scenarios are best left to the not so distant future (namely, 2010) to reveal.

In the meantime, we can content ourselves with the music video's latest proof that FPJ had us—the members of his audience—in his heart—as we continue to keep him in ours.



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2 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
11:40 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:40

3 ELIZABETH: GOLDEN AGE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

4 BEOWULF
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 CATACOMBS
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

6 GRINDHOUSE: DEATH PROOF
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

7 ENCHANTED
12:50 3:00 5:10 7:20 9:30

8 indieSine: 3 DAYS of DARKNESS
12:40 2:45 4:50 6:55 9:00

9 BATANES
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

10 HOOD of HORROR
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

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1 GRINDHOUSE: DEATH PROOF
1:00 3:20 5 35 7:50 10:00

2 indieSine: 3 DAYS of DARKNESS
12:50 2:40 4:30 6:20 8:10 10:00

3 BEOWULF 12:00 2:10 4:20
HITMAN 6:35 8:20 10:00

4 HOOD of HORROR
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

5 BATANES
12:2 2: 4:15 6:10 8:05 10:00

6 ENCHANTED
12:40 2:55 5:10 7:25 9:40

7 PASUKOB
12:30 2:20 4:10 6:00 7:50 9:40

Midtown

1 CATACOMBS
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

2 ELIZABETH: GOLDEN AGE
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
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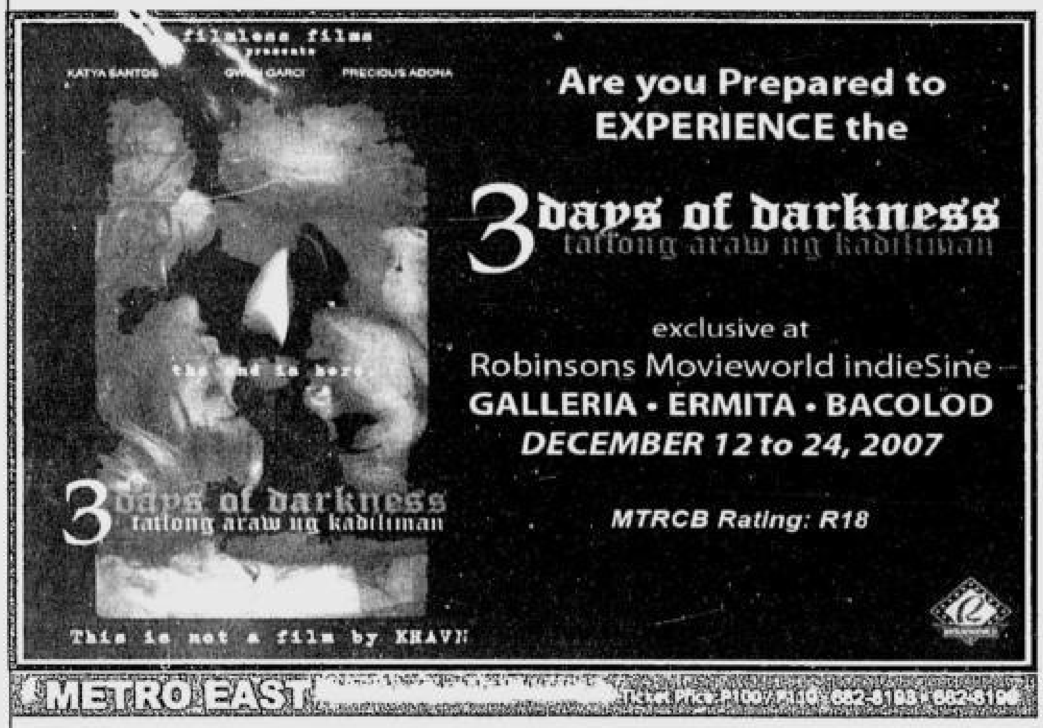

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11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

4 BATANES
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5 HOOD of HORROR
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6 ENCHANTED 12:30 2:30
BEOWULF 4:35 6:45 9:00

7 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

8 CATACOMBS
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

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Ronnie del Carmen has high hopes for local animators

By Rica Arevalo

FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, Ronnie del Carmen has been returning to the Philippines to share his expertise with local animators. Del Carmen works at as a story supervisor at Pixar ("Toy Story," "Cars"), the computer animation studio founded by John Lasseter.

The acclaimed animator led the studio's team of story artists to whip up "Finding Nemo," and is gearing up for codirectors, Pete Docter and Bob Peterson's "Up," which follows an old man's adventures, set for release in 2009.

Visuals

He tells us what his job entails: "As a story supervisor, I help directors make their story in reels. I supervise around 10 story artists. We're not writers—we do everything in pictures. We tell stories by serving a story's emotional and narrative needs by using the visuals we create. We flesh out the kinks to come up with an enjoyable movie!"

DEL CARMEN. Led Pixar's team of story artists in "Finding Nemo."

His enviable stint with Hollywood's animation industry came purely by accident. In fact, he

RONNIE/N3

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OPENS DECEMBER 19

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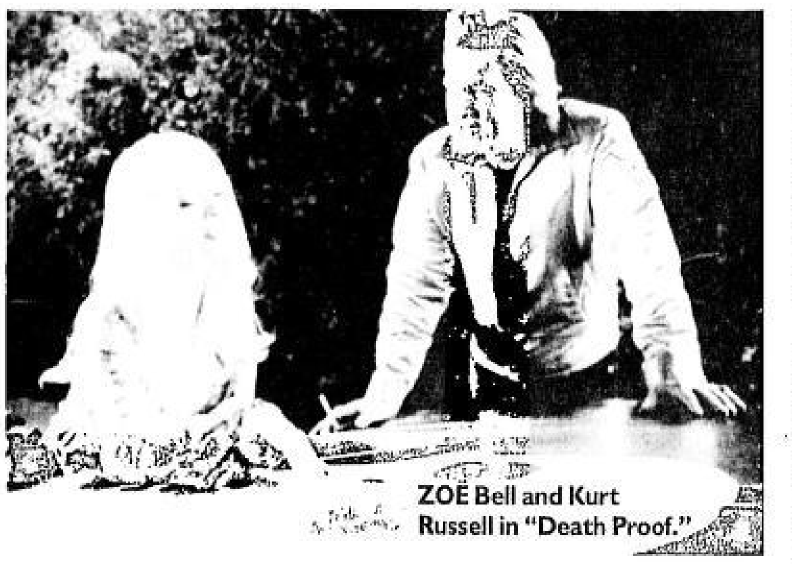
Tarantino's homage to B-movies is a guilty pleasure

By Noelani Torre


ZOË Bell and Kurt Russell in "Death Proof."

"DEATH PROOF" IS TRASHY, unashamedly exploitative and looks cheap, but it's also a scream, a blast—and nothing less than thoroughly entertaining! Originally released along with Robert Rodriguez's "Planet Terror" as part of a double feature, "Grindhouse," this Quentin Tarantino production pays homage to schlocky, drive-in B-movies that titillated audiences in the good, old days of nondigital, nonCGI-enhanced filmmaking.

You don't have to be a fan of 1970s exploitation flicks to appreciate the movie. All you need is a sense of humor, an appreciation for spectacle, and the ability to recognize that what appears to be cinematic dross can actually look like gold from a different perspective.

Fast cars

Some people probably won't enjoy this movie and will no doubt advise you to skip it, but if you just want to have fun, ignore them. "Death Proof" doesn't pretend to be anything else than what it is—a film loaded with booty, trash talk, fast cars, and occasional scenes where people bleed buckets. Besides, it's a Tarantino flick!

Made to look as grimy as the movies that inspired it, the film is scratchy and jumpy. It looks as far from digital as you can get—though, in a purely postmodern twist, these effects were actually achieved via digital enhancement.

Starring Kurt Russell, Rose McGowan, Sydney Tamiia Poitier, Vanessa Ferlito, Jordan Ladd, Tracie Thoms, Rosario Dawson, Zoë Bell and Mary Elizabeth Winstead, the film, while full of B-movie qualities, also has a script liberally peppered with interesting dialogue, frames that have been carefully constructed, and a story enriched with seemingly pointless moments that don't move the plot forward, but make the movie much more than a mere rehash of the '70s' grindhouse flicks. Tarantino, after all, always had an eye for anything odd, quirky and off-kilter!

The film has a simple story, which starts in Austin, Texas, where a psychotic stuntman called, well, Stuntman Mike (Kurt Russell), drives around in a "death-proof" car, which he uses to kill four women (McGowan, Poitier, Ferlito and Ladd).

Serial killer

This is how he gets his rocks off and, in the movie's second half, he's moved on to Lebanon, Tennessee and his next victims. These new women he's got an eye on, however, are tough babes, and our psychopathic serial killer ends up not death-proof, after all! The end.

In between the car smash-ups and chases are scenes that mark the movie as distinctively Tarantino (not that the car scenes aren't terrific, especially the hair-raising one in the second half): There's a lap dance, a couple negotiating the length of a make-out session, and free-flowing, trash-talking conversations among girl friends.

The actresses in the first half acquit themselves well, but it's the ones in the second half who really steal the show. Zoë Bell, in particular, who was Uma Thurman's stunt double in "Kill Bill," plays herself in this movie. She has a mind-blowing scene on the hood of a speeding 1970 Dodge Challenger. When she, along with Thoms and Dawson, beat the hell out of Stuntman Mike; it's amazingly, guiltily enjoyable—which isn't a bad way to describe the movie itself!

Ronnie del Carmen . . .

From page N2

started as an advertising director in Manila.

He shares, "I got fed up with my job, but the only work I could find at the time was in animation—I had no idea what I was doing! I had to learn from scratch, and it was a very awkward and painful start. Before I knew it, I wasn't worrying about it anymore!"

Del Carmen's big break came when he worked on Warner Brothers' "Batman: The Animated Series." He even bagged a Daytime Emmy in the Outstanding Special Class-Animated Program category for directing 1996's "Freakazoid."

The award-winning animator is having the time of his life at Pixar. He grins: "It's probably the best gig I've ever had—and also the longest job I ever held! Working in the movies isn't easy—it's stressful!

Collaborative atmosphere

"Other than deadlines, you also have to deal with different personalities. But, the great thing about working in a collaborative atmosphere is the elbow room you're given for your ideas to develop, which adds richness to the whole experience! Everybody's open to suggestions!"

"'Finding Nemo' was hard to sell, because why would anybody be interested to watch a movie about a fish? The last animated movie about a fish was 1964's 'The Incredible Mr. Limpet.' We were up against summer blockbusters. 'Nemo' was a huge gamble for Pixar, but it became our biggest-selling movie! Who knew it would sell? It was a box-office success, because people kept going back to the theaters to watch it again and again."

Is local animation ready to compete globally? Del Carmen stresses that he has high hopes for local animators. He explains: "The US is the prime mover of storytelling in animated form. Japan is a very close second. Everyone else is far behind, because there's something complex and perplexing in this form of storytelling.

"As a source of animation, the Philippines is one of the animated world's mainstays. We have to take advantage of the opportunity presented to us now. We're good at making things for other people, but we're also making stories for ourselves, and about ourselves."

Any suggestion to local animators? He replies: "We have good stories to tell. It would be great to a see a full-length animated movie made by Filipinos about Filipinos in the near future. Tell your own stories!"

Comic book

Does he plan to make his own animated feature? He beams: "I have about 20,000 plans to do one—I'm very good at planning. Seriously, making my own film has always been in the back of my mind." (He has, after all, a self-published comic book, "Paper Biscuit.") But, what's obvious is Del Carmen's intention to help the local animation industry come up with a full-length Filipino animated feature soon.

Recently, Ronnie traveled to Naga City in Bicol to facilitate a lecture series. He was also the Animation Council of the Philippines' special guest in the just-concluded "Animahenasyon 2007 Pinoy Animation Festival."

What Eddie Boy . . .

From page N4

Eddie Boy opens the box. His eyes widen: The box is filled with fried chicken drumsticks! He is so happy that tears well up in his eyes.

Wish

"Baby Jesus granted my wish. Did you get your wish, too, Papa?"

"Yes, I wished that business for the bakery would pick up, so I can keep my job."

"How about you, Tonio?"

"I wished I could find a job—and I got my old job back!"

"And you, Mama?"

"I wished that everyone's wish would be granted—and, thanks to you, it's really happened!"

A big smile spreads over Eddie Boy's face. Before he bites into his yummy drumstick, he exclaims, "Happy Birthday, Baby Jesus. And, Merry Christmas to all!"

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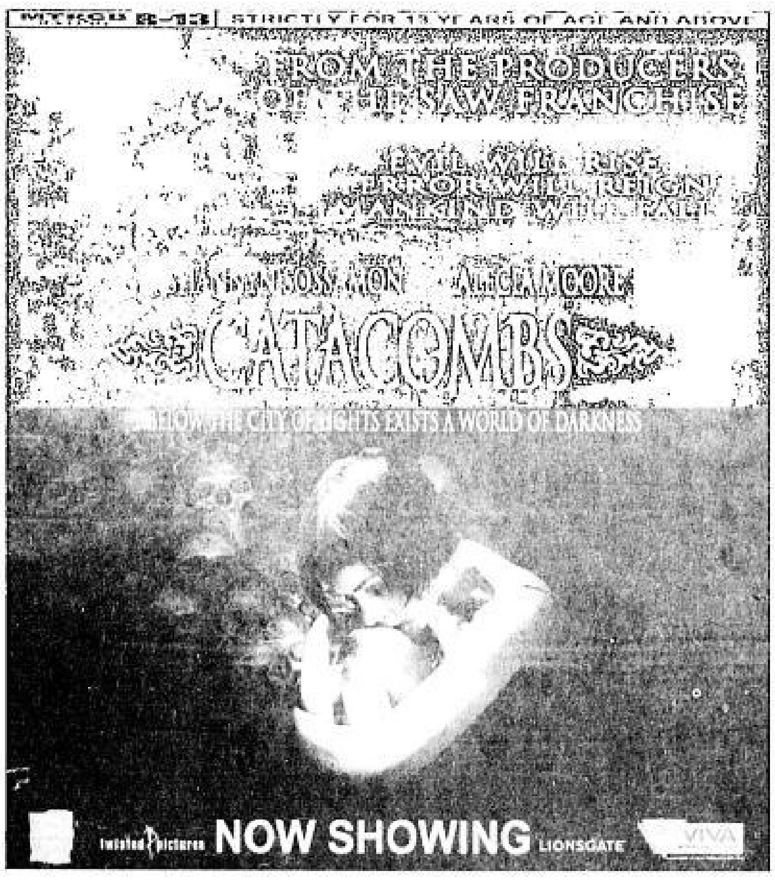
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YULETIDE STORY FOR YOUNG READERS

What Eddie Boy really wants for Christmas

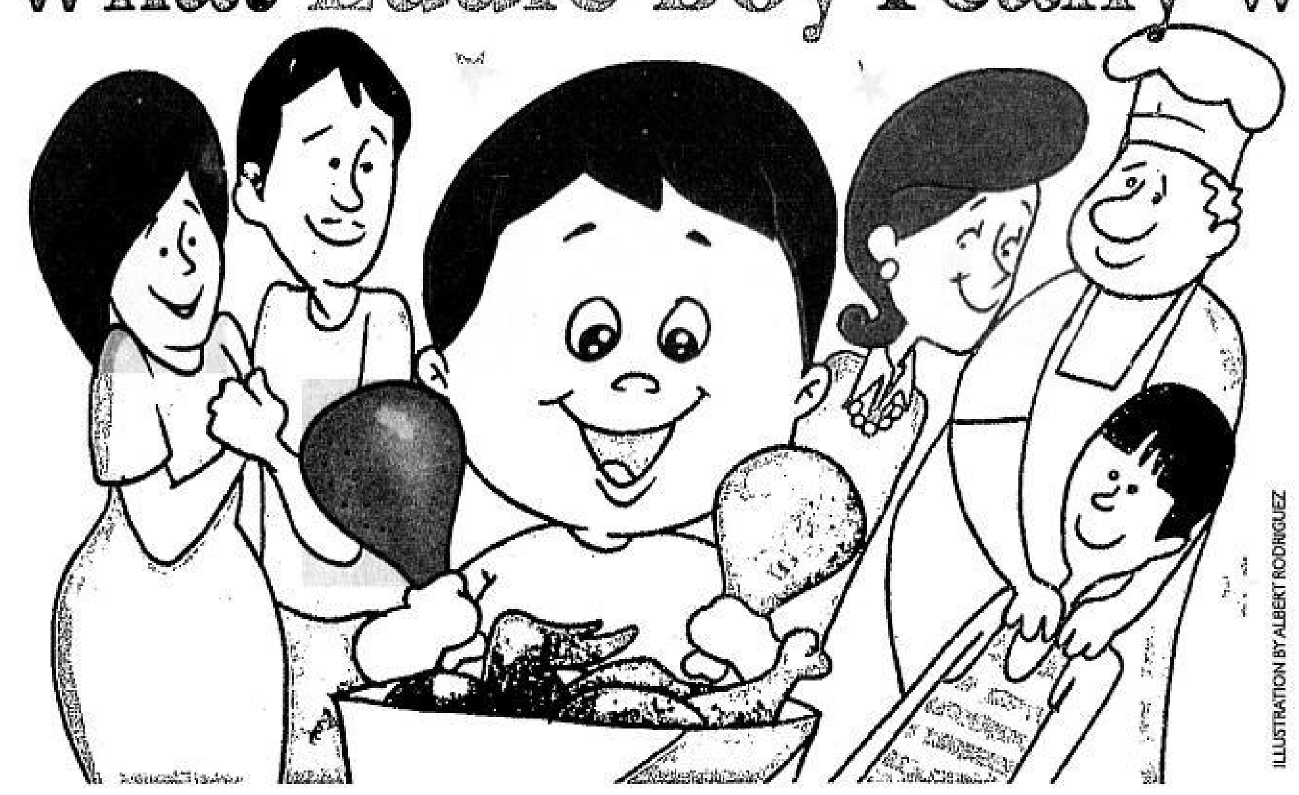

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Jeanne Lim

EDDIE BOY IS TURNING 5 YEARS OLD. HE does not like his birthday—Dec. 22! As far as he can remember, everybody is always busy celebrating some *other* Baby's birthday!

Eddie Boy's parents, Maria and Karlo, work in a small bakery. The owner provides them a small room, where they stay. Business is not doing well, so the owner has had to let the young helper, Tonio, go.

Husband and wife

Even worse, the owner tells Karlo that, if sales do not pick up, he might even have to close down the bakery! Both Karlo and Maria are worried about what is going to happen. They are planning to send Eddie Boy to school next year, but the money they have saved is not enough.

Very early the following morning, Maria wakes Eddie Boy up and dresses him up warmly. She tells him they're going to attend the *Simbang Gabi*. Eddie Boy has no idea what it is all about.

The December air is cold. How Eddie Boy wishes he stayed home next to the oven, where it is nice and warm! He holds on to his mother's hand and they walk almost seven blocks before they reach the church. Eddie Boy is surprised to see that the church is full of people. He sees some of his playmates, and Tonio, too.

After the mass, Eddie Boy asks his mother, "Today is not Sunday—how come there were so many people in church?

"Today is the first day of *Simbang Gabi*. They say, if you attend all the nine morning masses, your wish will come true!"

"You mean we are doing this for nine mornings?," he whines.

"Do you have a wish? What do you wish for this Christmas?"

Eddie Boy looks around him and points to the big billboard not far from the road. "I want *that*! I want to celebrate my birthday with that! Mmm!"

Big picture

Maria looks up. She sees a big picture of a little boy smiling, and in front of the boy is a platter filled with yummy fried chicken drumsticks!

Maria tells Karlo what Eddie Boy wants for his birthday. Karlo reaches into his pocket and fumbles with the few coins he has. He smiles sheepishly. "Don't worry. I will think of something," he promises.

Maria does not say anything. She gives him a sad smile.

Eddie Boy comes in and asks his Papa: "Mama said if I attend all the nine morning masses, my wish will come true. How is that possible? There are so many people in church, and all of them are wishing for something. How can *all* their wishes be granted?"

"*Simbang Gabi* is a Filipino tradition that goes all the way back to our great-great grandfather's time," his father explained. "It's a preparation to welcome the birth of Baby Jesus, who was born on Christmas Day. Make time for Him—because He always has time for you!"

So, Eddie Boy attends the dawn mass every day. He prays very hard and hopes that Baby Jesus hears his prayer—and grants his wish!

Something special

On the night before Eddie Boy's birthday, Karlo asks the bakery owner if he can have a small portion of bread dough. "It's Eddie Boy's birthday tomorrow, and I want to bake him something special," he explains.

"Go ahead," says the owner.

After work, Karlo stays up to knead the dough. He then carefully cuts and molds each piece into the shape of a chicken drumstick! To add flavor, Maria brushes some oil with garlic on it.

The next morning, Eddie Boy wakes up to a tray of freshly baked, garlic-flavored "drumstick bread"!

"Happy Birthday, son!," his parents greet him, beaming.

"Wow!" They smell great, and they look so real!" Eddie Boy gets one piece of "drumstick bread" and bites into it. "Mmmm!" And it tastes so *good*. Thank you!"

He dresses up fast, because he can't wait to go to church to thank Baby Jesus for granting his wish. He asks his Father if he can bring some of the bread to share with his playmates.

"Of course," his father beams, feeling proud because his son, despite being so young, already knows how to think of others.

Basket

Maria wraps the "drumsticks" in a towel to keep them warm and places them in a basket. Eddie Boy carries the basket all the way to church, skipping and hopping all the way. Maria is glad to see her son so happy!

After the mass, Eddie Boy asks permission to stay behind and wait for his playmates.

Soon, his playmates gather around him to greet him Happy Birthday. Eddie Boy gives them some drumstick bread, and they eat it up—fast!

Just then, a pretty lady passes by. "What are you selling, little boy?," she asks.

"Nothing. It's my birthday today, and my Papa baked me some 'drumstick bread.' I'm sharing it with my friends. Can I offer you one?"

The pretty lady, intrigued by the shape and aroma of the bread, accepts one piece from Eddie Boy. She takes a bite and asks, "Where can I find your father?"

Eddie Boy rides in the pretty lady's car. It stops in front of the small bakery. Karlo and Maria are surprised to see Eddie Boy getting off the car with the pretty lady.

The lady approaches Karlo and asks, "Did you bake this bread? It's wonderful!"

"It's my son's birthday today, and he wanted some fried chicken drumsticks. We can't afford them, so I baked him some bread in the form of drumsticks," Karlo explains.

"I love them. May I order some? Make me 200 pieces. I will send my driver to pick them up in the afternoon of the 24th. How much will that be?"

Maria asks the owner to come out, but before the owner can say anything, the lady pulls out a thousand peso bill and leaves it on the counter.

"I'm leaving the change for the little boy. It's for his birthday," she says as she gets into her car and drives away.

Cost

The owner calculates the cost of the 200 pieces of bread and hands the change over to Eddie Boy, who gives all the money to his mother. The owner is happy to make a big sale. He asks Karlo what else he needs.

"A helper. I don't think I can mold the bread alone."

"I wonder where I can find Tonio? We sure can use his help," says the owner.

"I know!," exclaims Eddie Boy.

Karlo and Tonio have only one day to prepare the ingredients. They start molding the dough in the morning; by lunchtime, the first tray of drumstick bread is already out of the oven. Soon, all 200 pieces of "drumstick bread" have been baked to perfection—and they all look like the real thing!

The aroma of the freshly baked bread attracts many passersby. Since they have-baked extra, they are able to sell more!

The bakery owner can't help but smile, "Looks like business is picking up again. Thank you, Karlo and Maria. Thank you, Tonio!" He gives each of them an envelope. "For your *Noche Buena*," he whispers.

Suddenly, Maria realizes that, since they've been so busy baking, she forgot to prepare something for dinner!

Bakery

At that very moment, the car of the pretty lady pulls up again in front of the bakery. The driver comes down with a box and a basket full of fruits. "For the little boy," he winks, before driving away with the 200 pieces of drumstick bread.

Karlo opens the box and is surprised to see what is inside. He shows it to Maria. She smiles.

"I will put these in the oven to keep them warm," she beams.

That night, in the house of the pretty lady, guests gather around the buffet table and taste the "drumstick bread," which they describe as a new sensation! They're amazed that the Ambassador's wife has again come up with such a unique dish!

Meanwhile, at the bakery, Karlo, Maria and Eddie Boy sit around their tiny table. They have asked Tonio to join them. On the table are some bread, fruits, and the box that the lady gave them.

"Open it, Eddie Boy." It's from the nice lady."

WHAT/ N3

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The futuristic designs of these digital timepieces were created by artist Matthew Waldman with an intention to mix art sophistication and functionality. Each of Nooka's four styles are unisex, and can be availed in leather, mesh or rubber band. They come fully equipped with LCD displays, a backlight, an alarm, and even a chronograph.

Waldman, who is also an instructor at New York's Parson's School of Design, envisioned his timepieces to present a more intuitive way of viewing time. The visual mass increases as time passes, giving weight to an ephemeral and abstract concept, by which the only danger could be getting so used to the visual paradigm you wouldn't want to go back to having old standard analogue and digital watches on your wrist.

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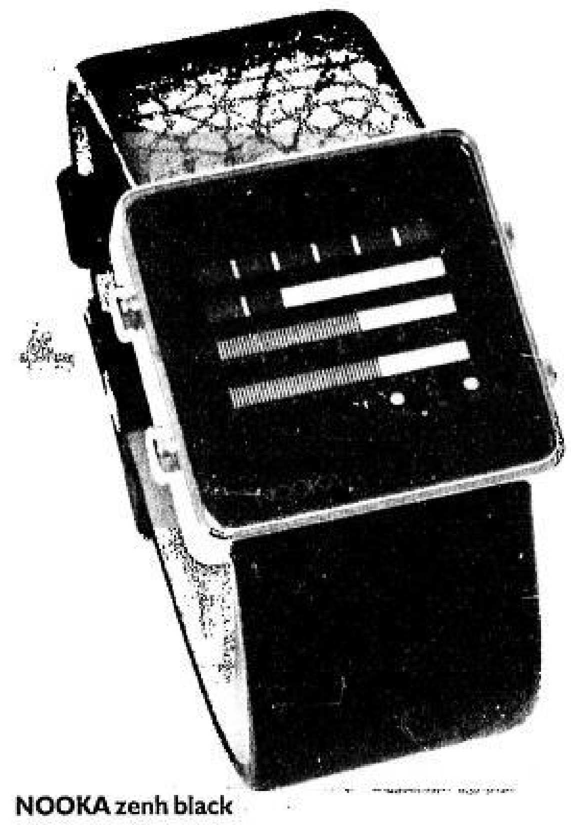

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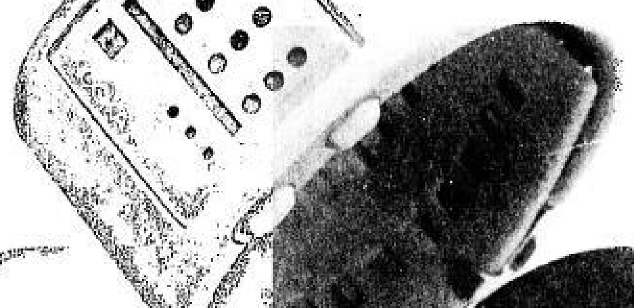

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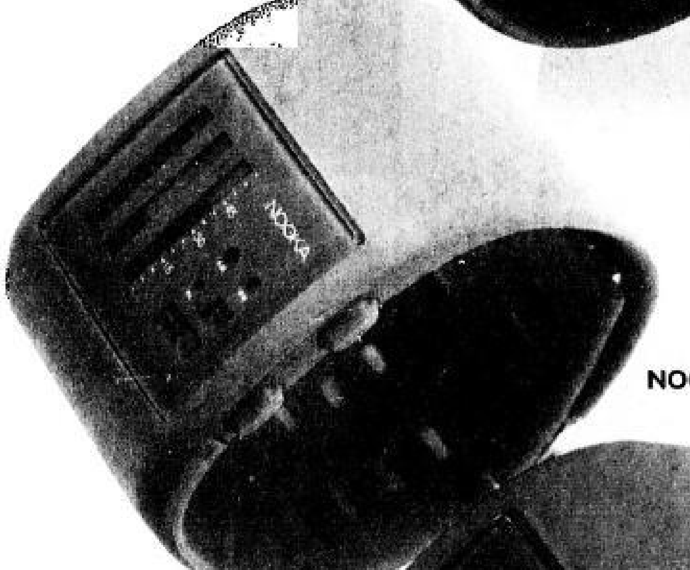

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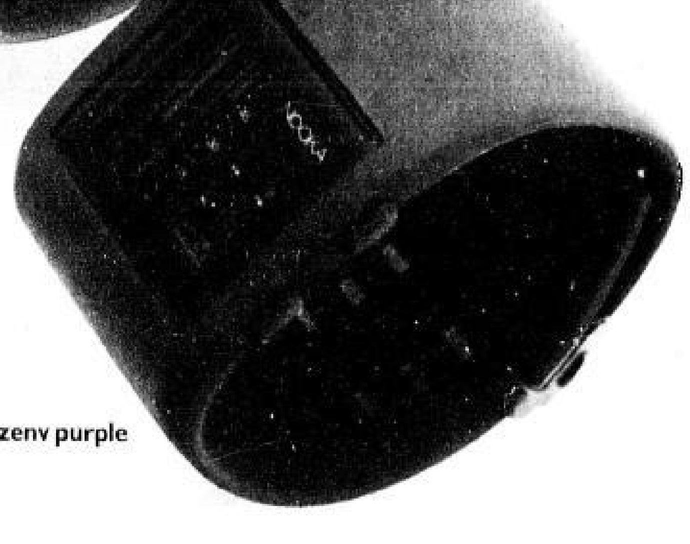

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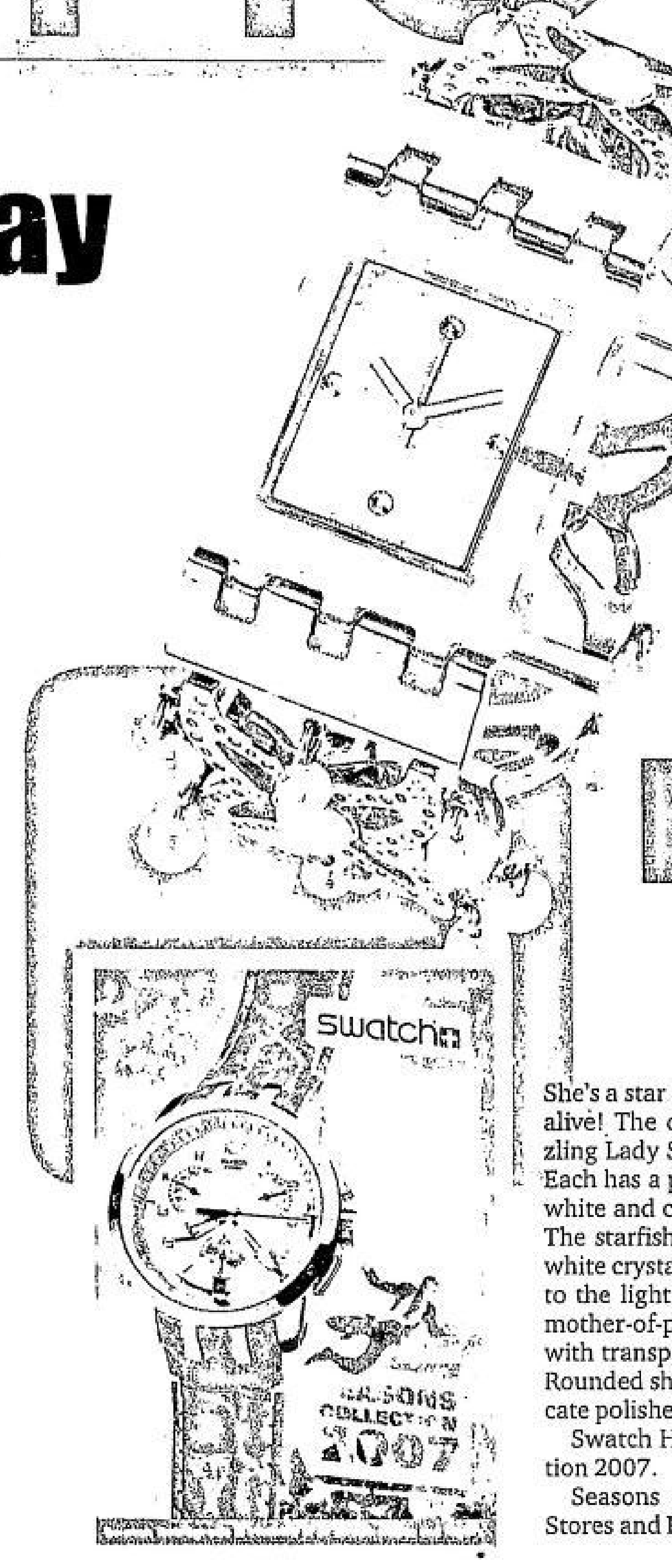
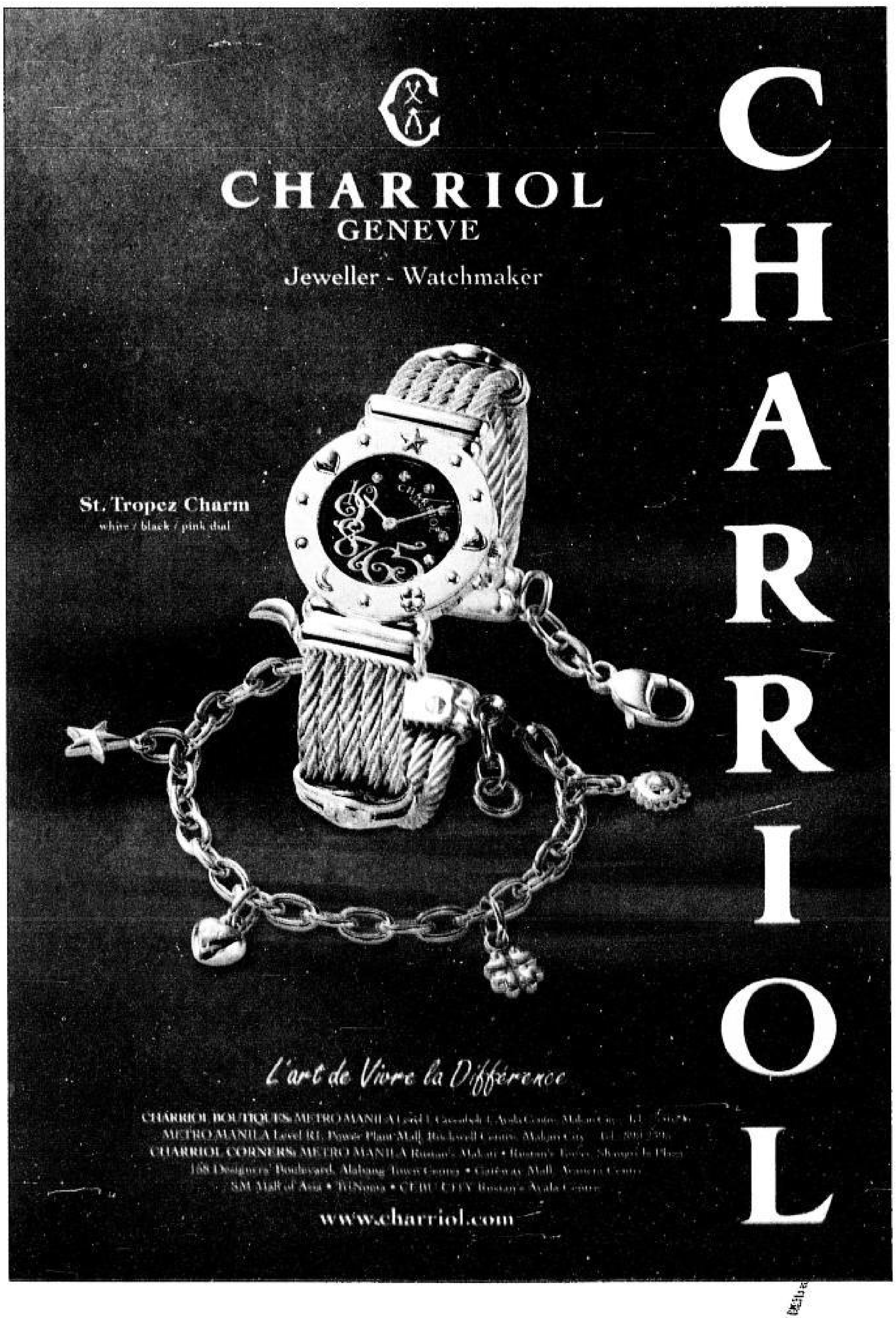
Holiday Dream



She's a star of the sea and the skies above, sparkling and alive! The delightfully decorative bracelet of this dazzling Lady Square links stainless steel starfish in a row. Each has a pale rose pearl at its center and is hung with white and colored pearl charms and a tiny leaf in steel. The starfish on either side of the dial are set with tiny white crystals. Polished steel end pieces link the bracelet to the light grey plastic case surrounding a pale silver mother-of-pearl dial. Absent all numerals, the dial is set with transparent white crystals at hours 3, 6, 9 and 12. Rounded shiny metal hour and minute hands and a delicate polished metal seconds hand mark the time.

Swatch Holiday Dream is part of the Seasons Collection 2007.

Seasons Collection 2007 is available at all Swatch Stores and Kiosks.


CHARRIOL
GENEVE
Jeweller - Watchmaker

St. Tropez Charm
white / black / pink dial

CHARRIOL

L'art de Vivre la Différence

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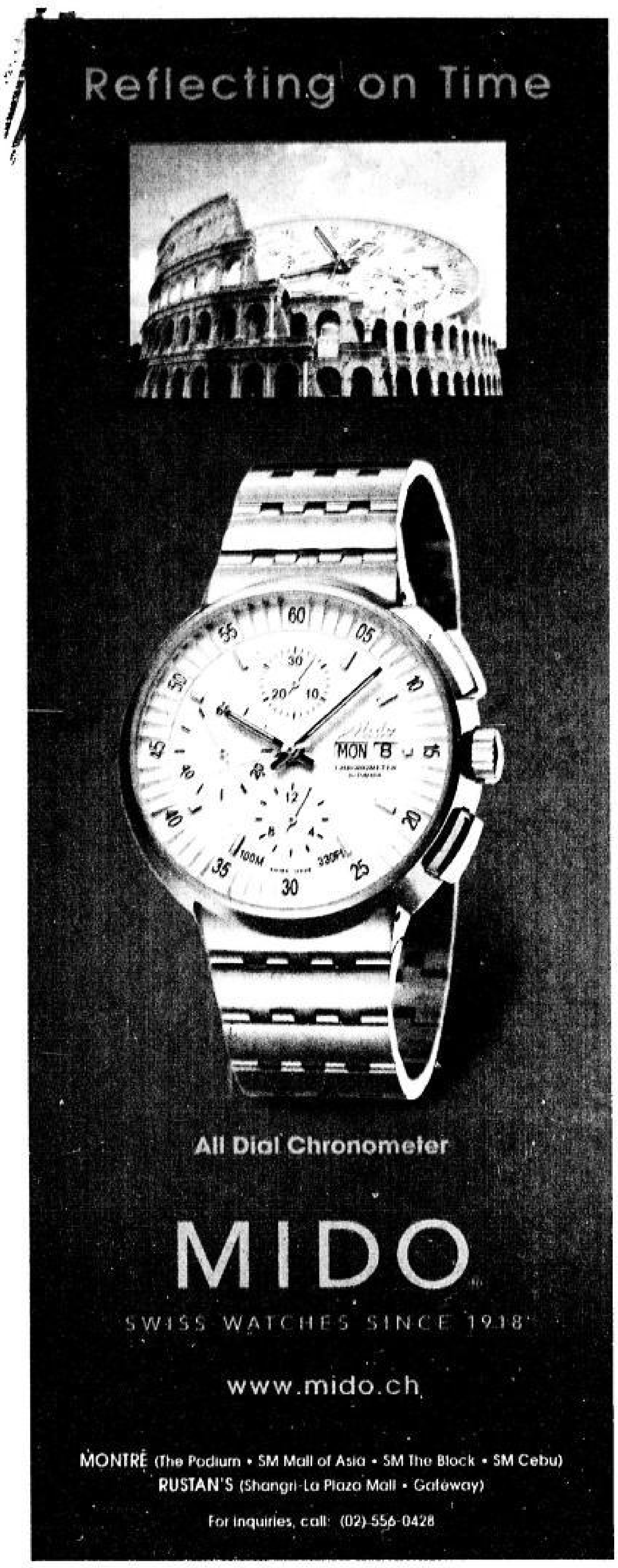
Reflecting on Time

All Dial Chronometer

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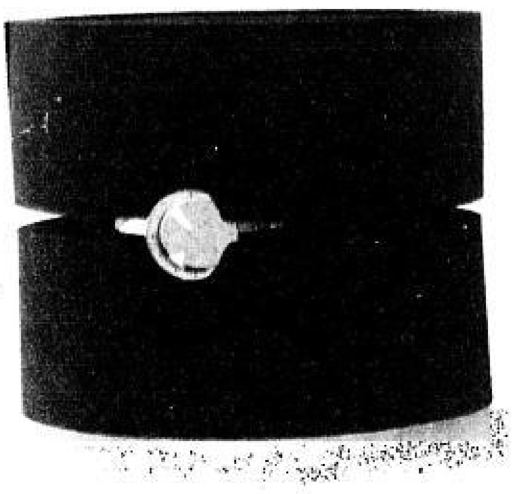
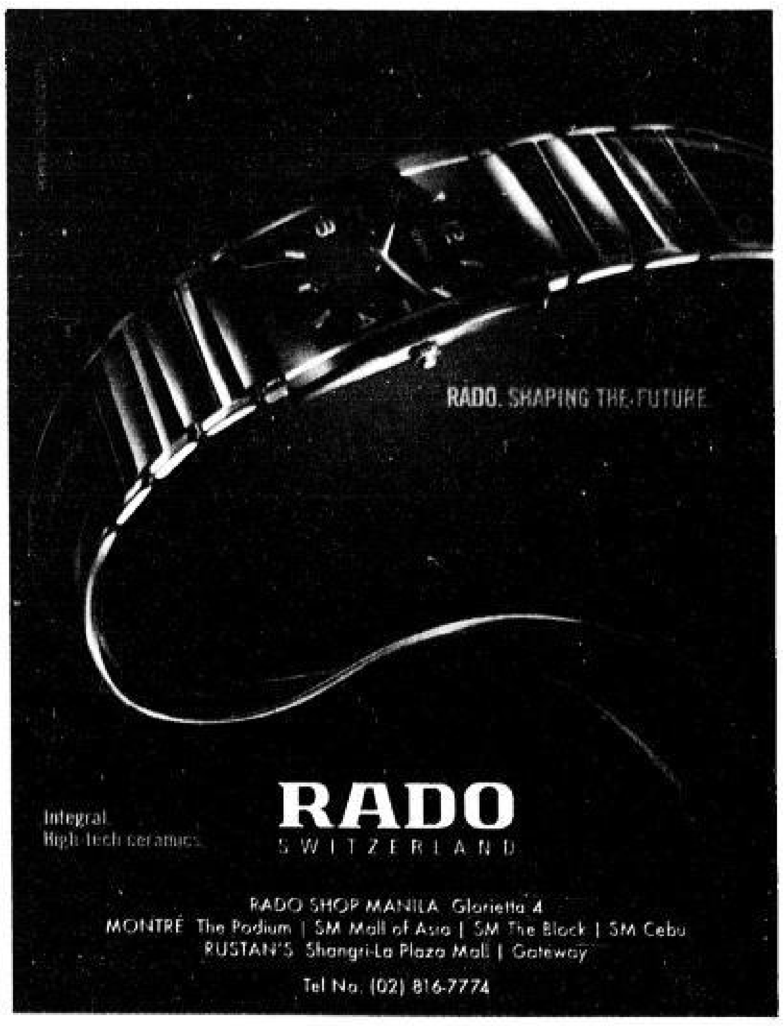
ISSEY MIYAKE
OVO
Shunji Yamanaka

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Yamanaka incorporates universality into a watch called 'Egg'

Known for his fashion-forward aesthetics, Issey Miyake fused the most creative and imaginative impulses of architects, industrial and interior designers and contemporary artists to come up with an innovative series of must-have watches.

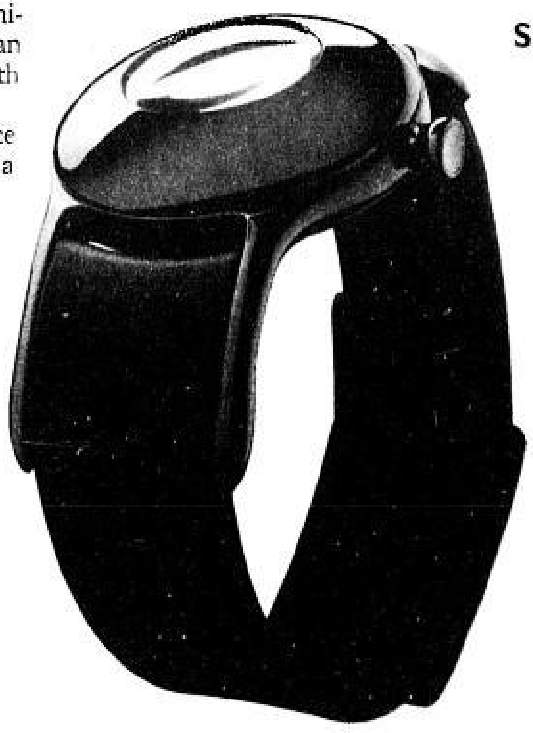
Shunji Yamanaka's Ovo Collection is the new trend in fashion. It is a steely dollop of industrial design suited for the minimalist style of timepiece. With its spherical form of bezel with luminous effect - the word OVO which means "egg", showcases an organic rounded design of polished stainless steel case with hands that rotate around two outer dials.

Having a fluid design, the face of the OVO appears to float in a pool of fluid, a cumulative optical effect emanating from transparent reflective surfaces, bent parabolas and deep luminescent layering.

Issey Miyake's Ovo Collection is exclusively available at MYTYM Glorietta 3, Rustan's and Selected NoCurfew Watch Stores.

SRP - P19,150.00

Log on to www.nocurfew.net for more information.



Silar001

Silar002

Silar003

TechnoMarine
GENEVE

KRA (Ka-Air-Ra)
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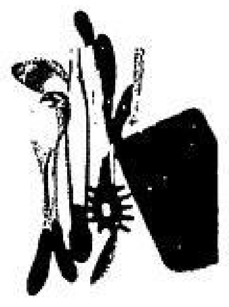
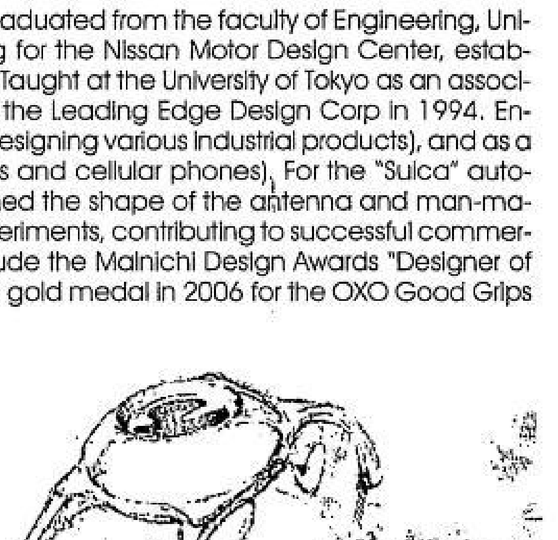

Kitchen tools

SHUNJI YAMANAKA
Product Designer

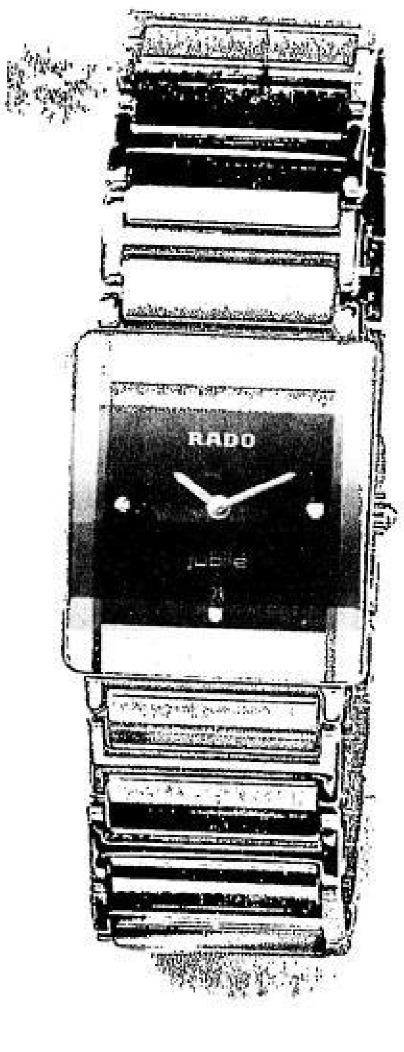
Born in Ehime Prefecture in 1957. Graduated from the faculty of Engineering, University of Tokyo, in 1982. After working for the Nissan Motor Design Center, established himself independently in 1987. Taught at the University of Tokyo as an associate professor from 1991. Established the Leading Edge Design Corp in 1994. Engaged currently both as a designer (designing various industrial products), and as a scientific engineer (developing robots and cellular phones). For the "Suica" automatic ticket-barrier system, he designed the shape of the antenna and man-machine interface based on his own experiments, contributing to successful commercialization of the system. Awards include the Mainichi Design Awards "Designer of the Year 2004", and the Good Design gold medal in 2006 for the OXO Good Grips kitchen tools.



Rado 'Integral'

- captivating simplicity

"An integral design of captivating simplicity" - this was the straightforward concept that initiated the development of the Rado "Integral". A watch that charms with its gentle harmony. Watch and bracelet form a perfect unity of shape and color, impressive with its clear lines and the seamless transition between the two. No element disturbs another, all components flow effortlessly into each other, belong together inseparably. And just as consummately compact as the watch looks, so it is bewitching to wear: the "Integral" encircles the wrist gently yet safely; one does not feel the watch but knows very well that one is wearing it.

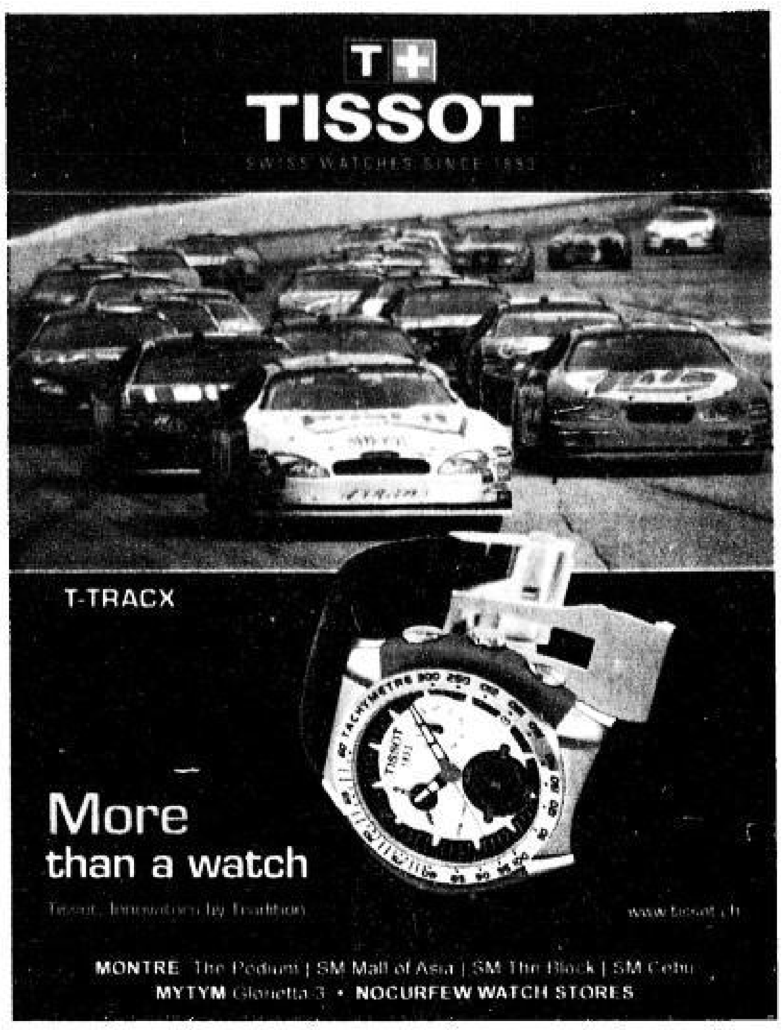


The matchless sensation of wearing the "Integral" is born from the material the watch is made from: high-tech ceramics. This spaceflight-proven material is typical of Rado, scratchproof and durable. Yet the bracelet, composed of fine elements of high-tech ceramics, is full of warmth and lightness. The gently curved ceramics components adapt to the body temperature and mould themselves around the wrist in an incomparable fashion. The dial of the "Integral" is protected by a slightly curved, scratchproof sapphire crystal, the folding clasp is made of titanium.

The "Integral" is available in three sizes and in different dial variations: whether purely reduced to two elegant hands, with hour markings, with diamonds on the dial, or in the ultra-exclusive version with two diamond-inlaid lateral elements. Every version of the "Integral" is captivating and loses none of the beguiling simplicity of the watch. And neither does the range of colors diminish this quality: whether in tasteful anthracite, brilliant platinum look, summery white, night-time blue or in the version with leather strap, the "Integral" remains simply beautiful. And for those who want more from their watch than just the time of day, the "Integral" is also available with a multifunction movement. Easy manipulation of the crown accesses a digital display with seven additional functions including alarm, second time zone and date. And when the display is no longer required, it can be easily cleared.

Is it the diversity of models that is impressive or the wearer-comfort that is fascinating? Is it the restrained design or simply the unified harmony of the watch that captivates? In any case, the "Integral" is one of the most popular models in the Rado collection all over the world. And there is every reason to suppose that it will continue to be so.

Rado integral collection is available at Rado Shop Manila located at G/F, Glorietta 4, Ayala, Makati. Call 816-7774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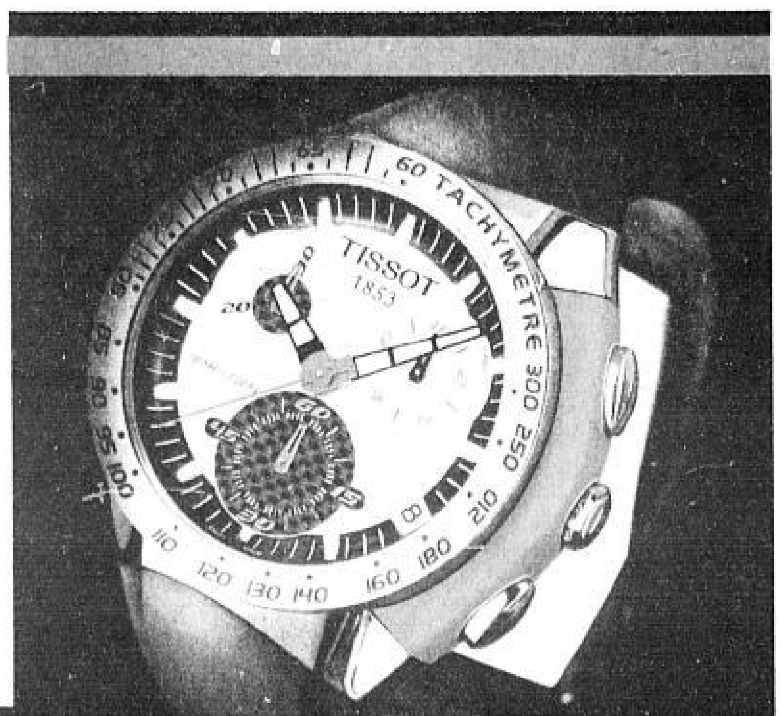


Tissot T-TRACX: Setting the Pace for Style and Performance

Tissot unveils a daring new line of casual timepieces inspired by the high-octane aesthetics of professional motor racing

For men and women of bold taste and attitude looking for the fastest track to sporty elegance, Tissot introduces T-TRACX, a new line of daring timepieces inspired by the cutting-edge aesthetics of international motor sports.

The T-TRACX line embodies the high-speed elegance of professional motor racing. The overall design reflects a race car's sleekly aerodynamic lines and bodywork, including an aileron-like protective case design. Brash racing colours highlight the hands, dials and details.

Merging traditional Tissot design qualities with modern motor-racing materials-fibre glass, stainless steel, black rubber-and high-performance, avant-garde components, T-TRACX sets the pace for audacious stylishness and performance. It is the perfect accessory for spirited young men and women who love the high-velocity thrills unique to the motor racing world, and are unafraid to live life in the fast lane, full out and full on.

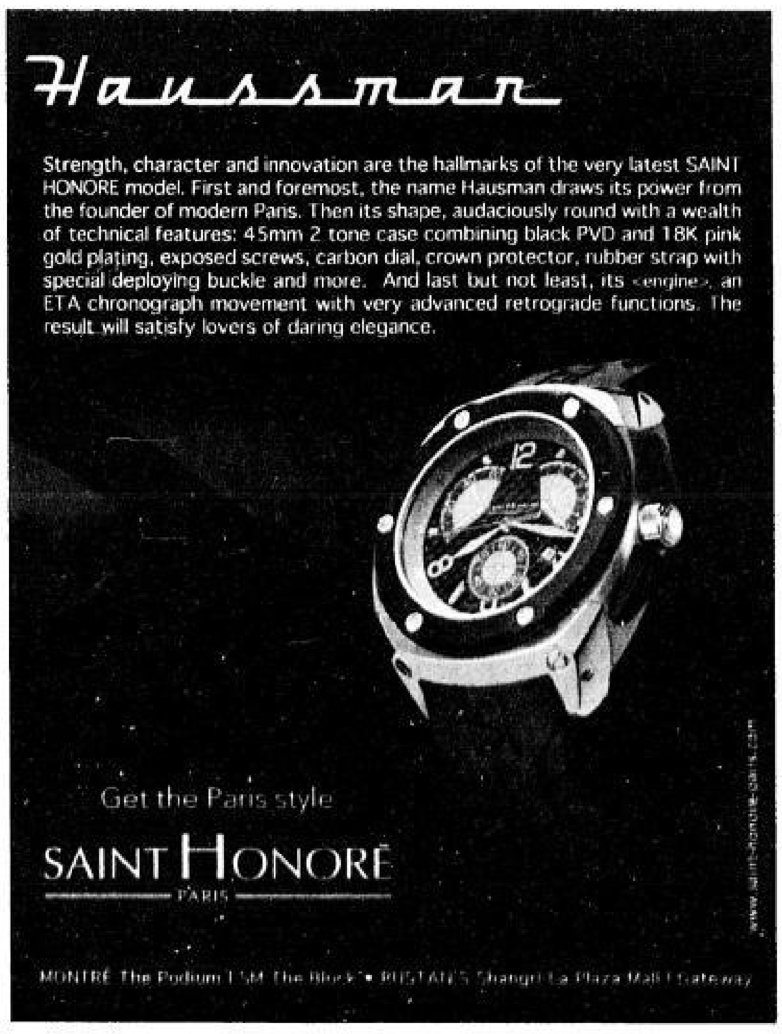
Features

- Swiss Made quartz chronograph movement
- Water-resistant to 100 metres
- 316L polished and brushed stainless steel and fibre glass case
- Black rubber strap with push-buttons clasp
- 30-minute and 1/10-of-a-second counters, central 60-second chronograph hand, with ADD and SPLIT functions
- Red, orange, or black and yellow case and dial

SRP

Model # T0104171703100 - Tissot T-Tracx Php 22,900

Available at Montre Podium, Montre Mall of Asia, Montre North Edsa, Rustan's Shangri-la, Rustan's Gateway.


Haussman

Strength, character and innovation are the hallmarks of the very latest SAINT HONORE model. First and foremost, the name Hausman draws its power from the founder of modern Paris. Then its shape, audaciously round with a wealth of technical features: 45mm 2 tone case combining black PVD and 18K pink gold plating, exposed screws, carbon dial, crown protector, rubber strap with special deploying buckle and more. And last but not least, its <engine>, an ETA chronograph movement with very advanced retrograde functions. The result will satisfy lovers of daring elegance.

Get the Paris style
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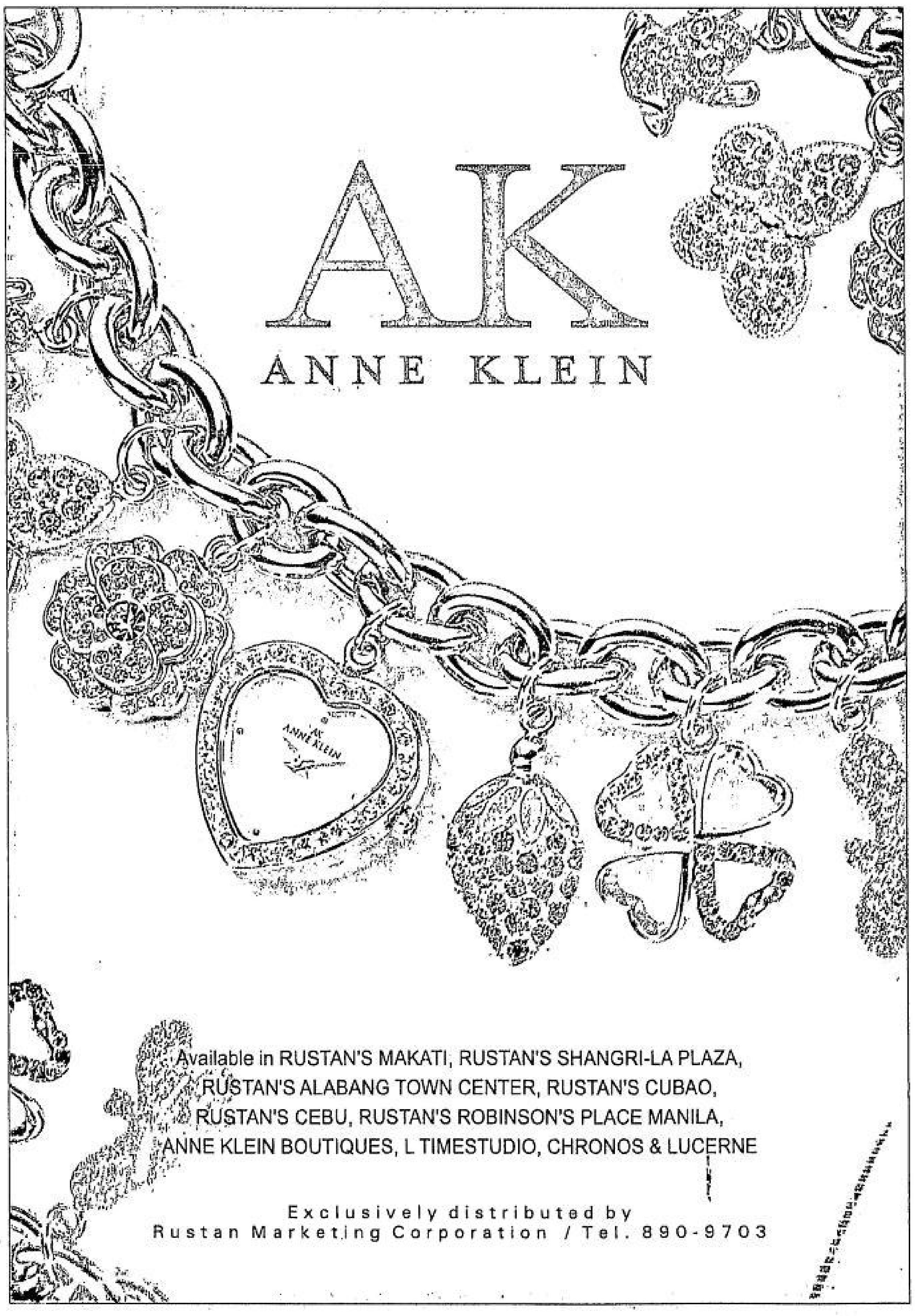
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Reflecting on time

Mido All Dial Lady

Mido All Dial Lady

Mido's latest creation charms its wearers through its trendy style combined with the timeless beauty of diamonds: A unique attraction lies in the nuances of its Mother-of-pearl dial-irresistible day and night.

If the Swiss watchmaking brand Mido has been highly reputed on the international watchmaking scene since 1918 for the quality crafting of their automatic timepieces, this reputation also comes from its aesthetic innovation. Creativity and excellence are combined in a coherent distinctive style, and the latest All Dial Lady is a superb example of this.

What is most striking in this new model is its color: a passionate red. Beautiful and attractive, the seduction of All Dial Lady in red is both provoking and elegant. While the design of its case leaves no doubt about the identity of the line, the visual impact offers a unique style, which harmoniously combines the spirit of the collection with a fashion orientation. The composition of the dial is clear-cut and radiant: dial ring and Arabic numeral-6 and 12-set with 78 diamonds on a white mother of pearl dial. The accurate reading of the hour is ensured by a dial placed in an optimal position on the case and protected by a non-reflecting sapphire glass. The ultimate pleasure for a model that will not pass unnoticed: the charms of the All Dial Lady are enhanced by its red leather bracelet.

The various All Dial Lady versions are guaranteed water-resistant up to 50 meters (unique Aquadura system). The decorated oscillation weight of the high quality automatic ETA 2678 movement can be admired through the transparent caseback. The watch is shock-resistant thanks to the Incabloc system.

The All Dial Lady collection is currently available in a range of models from all Mido retail dealers.

Technical information

Movement: Automatic ETA 2678, 7¾''', Ø17.20 mm, Height: 5.35 mm, 25 jewels, 28'800 A/H, Incabloc and Nivacourbe shock-absorber, Nivaflex NO mainspring, decorated oscillation weight. Function HMSD. Adjusted in 3 different positions for high accuracy, 40 hour power reserve.

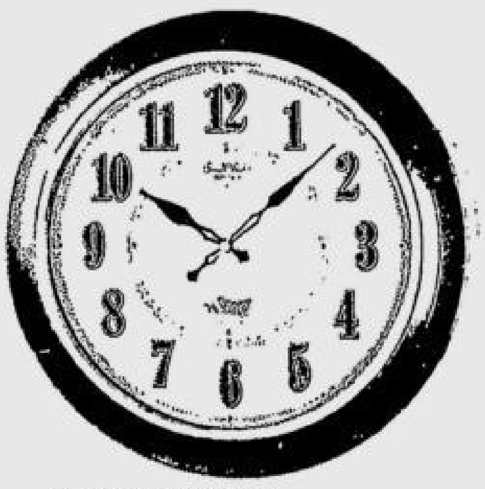
Case: Stainless steel 316L (DIN X2CrNiMo 17 14 3), 2-parts, anti-reflecting sapphire crystal treated on both sides, Aquadura cork crown sealing system (permanently sealed like a bottle of wine!), water-resistant up to 50 metres, 8-digit serial number engraved, transparent case back to see the fine elaborate movement.

Bracelet: Stainless steel 316L (DIN X2CrNiMo 17 14 3) with folding clasp and two push-pieces or genuine calf leather strap with crocodile imitation in red with stainless steel folding clasp.

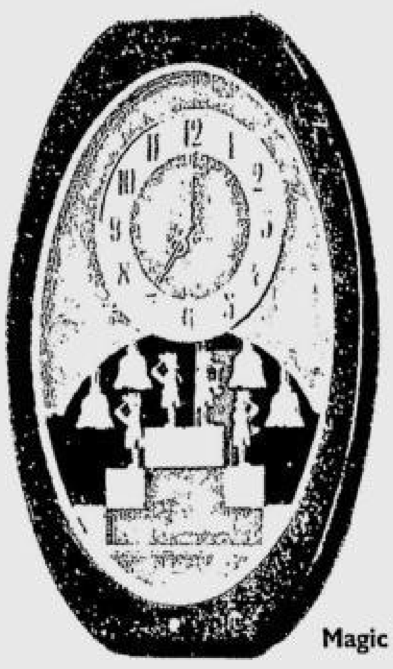
Dial: Mother-of-pearl dial and 78 diamonds.

Real time, real magic, real Rhythm

Rhythm Watch Company Ltd was established in 1950. Over the years, it has developed into a world leader in the manufacturing of time keeping products with the production of over 20 million clocks and movements sold throughout the world. What sets Rhythm apart from the rest of the industry is its investment in the development of the state-of-the-art features and designs. Rhythm's approach is "Do not follow, be a leader." And that's what Rhythm has done-developing features and designs that meet the needs of today's lifestyle of the consumer, also keeping in mind the merchandising needs of the retailer, with motion and sound that attract the consumer. Since Rhythm is a vertically integrated manufacturing company, total quality control is enforced from design concept right through the entire manufacturing process.



Country Jamboree



Magic Motion Clock

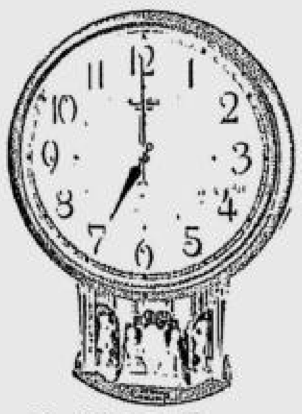
The Karakuri Collection

The word Karakuri means a mechanical device to tease, trick, or take a person by surprise. It implies hidden magic, or an element of mystery. It was in the 18th century that Japan saw the debut of "Karakuri-ningyo" which means puppets fitted with mechanisms inside that made them move by themselves. Each puppet is created through intricate combination of woodwork craftsmanship with various other skills, such as mask making, carving, fine carpentry, mechanism fitting, and clothing fashion art.

With its innovative idea and advanced technology, Rhythm combines Karakuri into timepiece and gives birth to the state-of-the-art Magic Motion Clock. "Fascinating" is the word most people use when describing Magic Motion Clock. At the top of each hour, the magic begins. The magical doll transforms the attractive design of these clocks into a display of charming motion and pleasing melodies. As the Magic Motion clocks come to life, they will become the center of attention and topic of conversation for years to come.

The Super Symphonic Sound Collection

The latest sound technology of Rhythm brings about a new level of enjoyment to your home every hour. Playing melodies of memorable tunes, Super Symphonic Sound produces a true-to-life musical performance with the synchronized motion of the verisimilar figurines. You will be amazed by the fantastic audio and visual effect brought by the magical symphonic orchestra.



Hard Fantasy Open

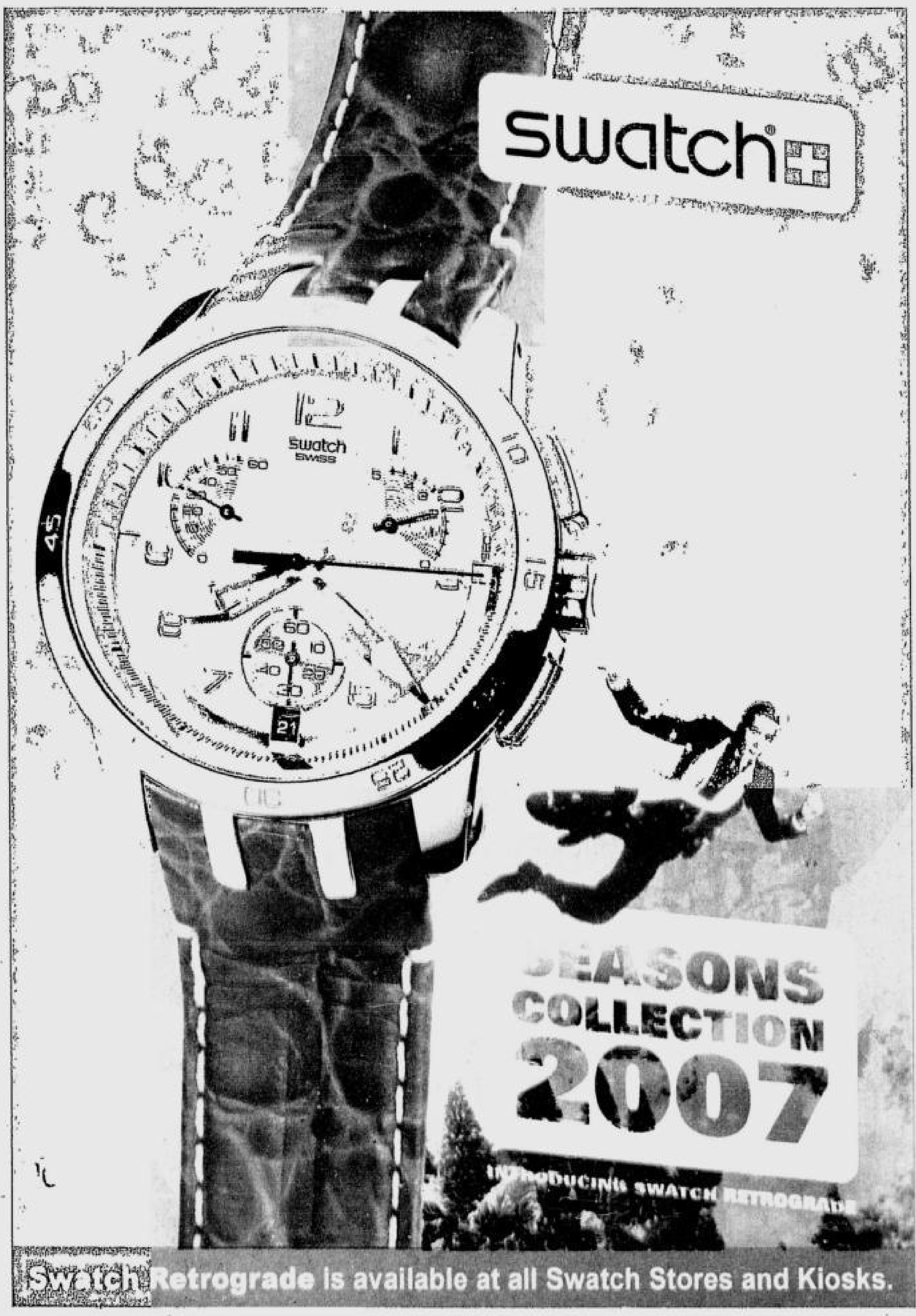
Harp Fantasy

Harp Fantasy is the masterpiece of Super Symphonic Sound collection. On the top of the hour, the hidden stage at the bottom of the clock opens. Fairies inside start the musical performance accompanying with colorful flashing light which is corresponding to the rhythm of melodies. Six unfading popular melodies play in turn every hour: "Unchained Melody", "Amazing Graze", "Tennessee Waltz", "Imagine", "Sunrise, Sunset" and "The Phantom of the Opera". In Christmastime, Harp Fantasy allows you to switch to six Christmas songs: "Feliz Navidad", "Deck the Halls", "Santa Claus is Coming to Town", "First Noel", "Sleigh Ride" and "Joy to the World".

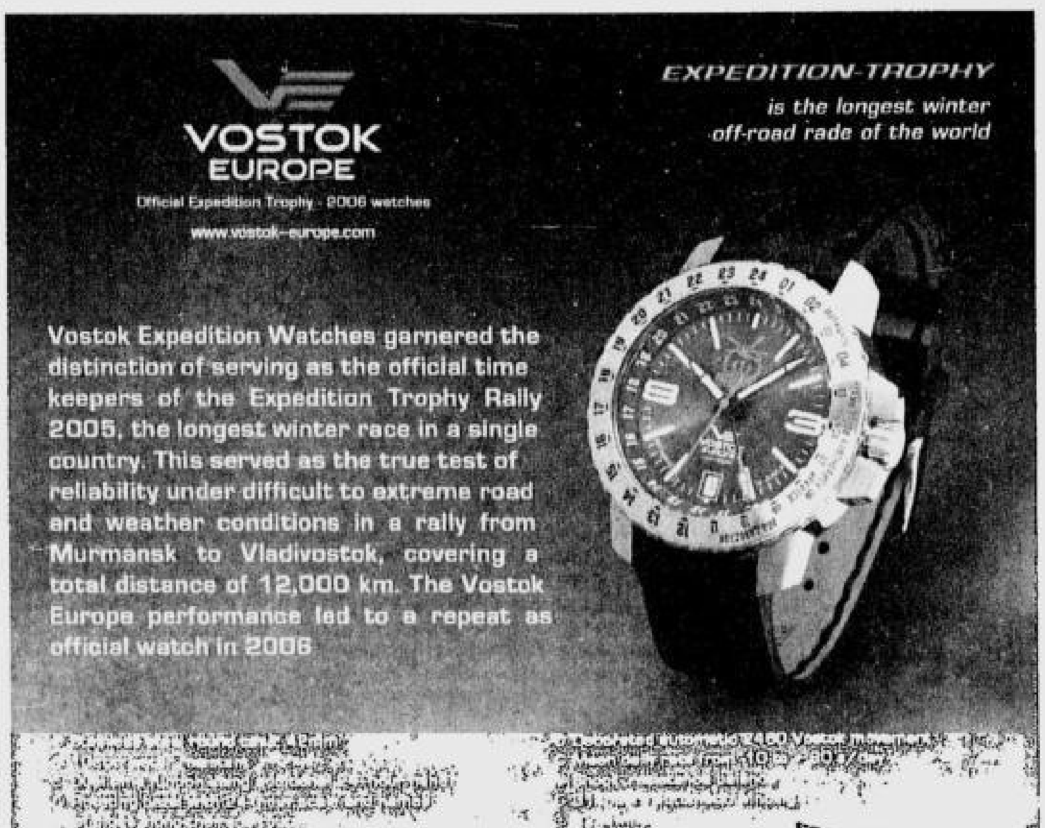
Country Jamboree

At the first glance, Country Jamboree appears to be a nostalgic look at the old-time school clock, however, it is anything but ordinary. On the top of the hour, each side opens to reveal four American cowboys from the West. Playing six popular country songs in Super Symphonic Sound, the cowboys start the Jamboree to celebrate the golden harvest: "Jambalaya", "You are My Sunshine", "Take me Home Country Road", "Yellow Rose of Texas", "Stand by Your Man" and "Oh Susanna". In Christmas time, Country Jamboree allows you to switch to six various Christmas songs that will surely give you the real Rhythm of the holiday.

All Rhythm Watches are exclusively available at all Montres Watch Stores and Les Massion De Montres at Rustan's Shangri-La Plaza Mall. For more details, log on to www.rhythm.com.hk.



Swatch Retrograde is available at all Swatch Stores and Kiosks.



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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National / Citizenship	Position
KOWEPO INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION Net One Ctr., 26th St. cor. 3rd Ave., Crescent Park West, BGC, Taguig City	Kyeong Il Kim Korean	Director
WAZ LIAN MANAGEMENT PHILS. INC. Suite 802 8/F Ma. Natividad Bldg., 470 TM Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila	Loke Beng Hwa Malaysian	Consultant
SCANMAR MARITIME SERVICES, INC. G/F Royal Enterprise Bldg., 2227 Chino Roces Ave., Makati City	Josephus Constant Johannes Marie Mes Dutch	Owner's Representative
AIG BUSINESS PROCESSING SERVICES, INC. Philamlife I.T. Bldg., Acacia Ave., Madrigal Business Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Gerardo Morales American	Director for Strategic Services
BUREAU OF SOILS AND WATER MANAGEMENT SRDC Bldg.,Elliptical Road cor. Visayas Ave., Diliman, Quezon City	Abdullahi Gure Mamun Somalian	Research I Assistant
KEPCO ILIJAN CORPORATION 18/F Citibank Tower,8741 Paseo de Roxas, Salcedo Village, Makati City	Woo Gun Park Korean	Manager, Planning Department
KEPCO PHILIPPINES CORPORATION 18/F Citibank Tower, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Yong Uk Kim Korean	Manager, Corporate Strategy Team Department
HANIN CORPORATION 328 Chateau Verde Condo., Valle Verde I, Ugong, Pasig City	Chung Soo Kim Korean	Director
STA.FE MOVING AND RELOCATION SERVICES Unit 3, First Ave., Manalac, Taguig City	Vedit Kurangil Australian	Managing Director
FUJIAN SINO-PHIL MINING CORPORATION 1015 M.H.del Pilar cor. T.M. Kalaw Sts., Ermita Manila	Zhengui Yang Chinese	Planning Supervisor
KOWEPO INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION Net One Ctr., 26th St. cor. 3rd Ave., Crescent Park West, BGC, Taguig City	Jongseon Kim Korean	President
FUJIAN SINO-PHIL MINING CORPORATION 1015 M.H. del Pilar cor. T.M. Kalaw Sts., Ermita Manila	Qisheng Jiang Chinese	Admin Supervisor
FUJIAN SINO-PHIL MINING CORPORATION 1015 M.H. del Pilar cor. T.M. Kalaw Sts., Ermita Manila	Jinfu Cao Chinese	Asst.Admin Supervisor
INFOSYS BPO LIMITED-PHILIPPINE BRANCH 3/F Trade Hall B, Metro Market Market, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City	Vivash Anand Indian	Assistant Manager-Quality Lead
FAMILY MATE TRADING,INC. 5606-B Don Pedro St., Poblacion, Makati City	Sumi Park Korean	Operations Staff
ESQUIRE INTERNATIONAL FINANCING INC. Cityland 10,1106 11/F Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Sunny Bhardwaj Indian	Asst.Manager
ESQUIRE INTERNATIONAL FINANCING INC. Cityland 10,1106 11/F Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Jasvir Chand P Indian	Supervisor
ESQUIRE INTERNATIONAL FINANCING INC. Cityland 10,1106 11/F Dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Navdeep Awasthi Indian	Evaluator II
MANPOWER OUTSOURCING SERVICES INC. 14/F, Bankmer Bldg., 6756 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Mazen Rizk Lebanese	Support Engineer-Middle East Team
PROPLE BPO INC. 12/F Chatham House, Valero St.,Salcedo Village, Makati City	Su Hui Ko Korean	Multi-lingual Program Administrator

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

for
RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC, Regional Director

(PDI – December 15, 2007)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

December 11, 2007

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Republic of the Philippines

Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation
[RIZ-07-29492]

The scope of work shall include Supply of Labor, Tools, Materials and Equipment for the Repair, Testing, Installing and Commissioning of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation including Supply and Retrofitting of Electronic Winding and Oil Temperature Monitoring Device.

1. The **National Transmission Corporation (TransCo)** through the Annual Corporate Budget of 2007 intends to apply the sum of **PHILIPPINE PESOS FORTY MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (PHP 40,500,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation. **Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected.**
2. **TransCo** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the **Repair of 300 MVA Power Transformer (T2) of Dolores Substation**. The duration of the contract is **Seven (7) Months**. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

   Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last fifteen (15) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Documents.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from **TransCo** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**, during working days starting **December 17, 2007**.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **PHP 5,000.00**. The method of payment will be **on cash basis only**. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. **TransCo** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference to all interested parties on **January 8, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.** at the Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman Quezon City, Philippines.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before the date and time specified in item 8 below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and in the amount specified in Clause 22, Section III, Bid Data Sheet of the Bidding documents or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **January 23, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.** at the Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City,Philippines.
9. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the said address
10. The bidding is also open to foreign bidders with eligibility requirements described in Clause 3 above and in the Bidding Documents.
11. **TransCo** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Mr. R. D. NABONG
Manager, Bids & Contracts Management Department
Ground Floor, Power Center
National Transmission Corporation
Quezon Avenue Corner B.I.R. Road
1104 Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. No. (632) 981-2212; 981-2213; 921-23-08
Fax No. (632) 921-23-08
Website: **http://www.transco.ph**

(Sgd.) **Atty. NOEL Z. DE LEON**
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI - Dec. 15 & 23, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF SANTA ROSA
Province of Laguna

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The *City Government of Santa Rosa* through the ***General Fund of 2008*** intends to apply the sum of ***TWENTY-SEVEN MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (Php27,500,000.00)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***Collecting, Hauling and Disposal of Solid Waste of the City Government from February 1, 2008 to July 31, 2008, City of Santa Rosa, Laguna, Project Reference Number: G-2007-834.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening. The schedule of BAC activities are as follows:

BAC ACTIVITIES	DATE	VENUE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php27,500.00	December 17-27, 2007 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	BAC Office Santa Rosa City Hall J.P. Rizal Blvd., Market Area City of Santa Rosa, Laguna
2. Pre-bid Conference	December 21, 2007 10:00 AM	
3. Receipt and Opening of Bids	January 3, 2008 10:00 AM	

2 All Bids for the abovementioned project must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and in the amount as stated in the Bid Data Sheet (BDS) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

3. Request for clarifications must be submitted at least ten (10) calendar days before the scheduled opening of bids as tabulated above. For further inquiry, please call telephone number (049) 534-1192.

4. The *City Government of Santa Rosa* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **ROMULO M. CATINDIG**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Dec. 15, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
VALENCIA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Hagkol, Valencia City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

The **VALENCIA CITY WATER DISTRICT** invites interested parties to submit sealed bids for bidding of:

Item	Particulars	Quantity
1. Security Guards	8 hrs/shift	21 Guards

** Rate is based on PADPAO Standard Rate*

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 4, 2007
2. Pre-bid Conference	December 7, 2007
3. Submission of Letters of Intent and Application for Eligibility and Bidding documents	On or before December 17, 2007 @ 5:00 pm
4. Opening of Bids	December 18, 2007 @ 9:30 am
5. Bid Evaluation	Right after opening of bids
6. Post-qualification	December 19-26, 2007
7. Notice of Award	December 27, 2007

Interested Parties may secure bidding documents from the BAC Secretariat at Valencia City Water District, Tel. No. (088) 222-3738/(088) 828-2067 and look for Irene or Stiffany.

The VCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to VCWD. It likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of bids nor does not guarantee that the award shall be made.

Prepared by:	Noted & Approved by:
(Sgd.) **MICHEAL M. PORNIA** BAC Chair	(Sgd.) **RUEL P. PADREQUIL** General Manager

(PDI–Dec. 9 & 15, 2007)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION
MAGALLANES DRIVE, INTRAMUROS
1002 MANILA

NOTICE
TO ALL FOREIGNERS

All registered foreigners, permanent or temporary residents in the Philippines are hereby reminded **to report in person**, pursuant to Section 10 of the Alien Registration Act of 1950, **within the first sixty (60) days (from 02 January to 01 March) of 2008** at the Alien Registration Division (ARD), Bureau of Immigration, Manila, or at the Immigration Subport/ District/Field office nearest their place of residence:

The following documents shall be presented by the foreigner during the Annual Report (AR):

1. Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR) / ACR I-Card,
2. Certificate of Residence (CR), and
3. Official Receipts (O.R.'s) covering payment of previous AR fees.

An **Annual Report fee of P300.00** and **P10.00 Legal Research fee** shall be paid by the foreigner.

The parent or legal guardian of a foreigner who is less than fourteen (14) years of age, shall have the duty of reporting for such foreigner. Provided, that whenever such foreigner attains his fourteenth birthday in the Philippines, he shall within fifteen (15) days from his 14th birthday apply in person for re-registration and fingerprinting, paying the registration fee and thereafter make his own annual report once a year within the period and at the place above designated.

A foreigner holder of paper-based ACR, whose visa is not exempt from payment of immigration fees, shall not be permitted to make his Annual Report without applying for an ACR I-Card. The deadline to apply for ACR I-Card shall expire on 31 December 2007 pursuant to Memorandum Order No. AFF-07-006 dated 21 February 2007.

Foreigners who fail to comply with the provisions of the Alien Registration Act of 1950 are subject to administrative fine and/ or imprisonment, at the option of the Commissioner of Immigration.

(Sgd.) **MARCELINO C. LIBANAN**
Commissioner

(PDI – December 15 & 16, 2007)

OPEN HOUSE ON DEC. 16, 2007
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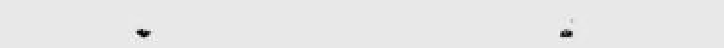
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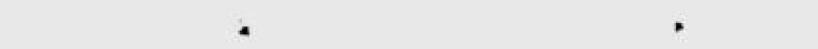

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MANILA, PHILIPPINES

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Your responsibilities include inspections, training and providing shipping and marine advice to a range of Shell's operations and customers.

Requirements:
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For more information and to apply online, please visit **www.shell.com/careers** → Professionals → Job Search → Region → Asia. Please quote reference XPH084D when applying.

Closing Date: December 31, 2007

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State of Kuwait
Ministry of Health

Ministry of Health, State of Kuwait the following categories of technicians:

1. **Echo Technician**
2. **Cath Lab Technician**

Qualification:
- Bachelor's degree in the respective field plus 2 (two) years experience (preferred).

Job requirements:
- Thorough knowledge of the profession.
- Good Command of English.

Applications including detailed C.V., copies of qualification and experience certificates, with passport copy to be sent to the following address:

EMBASSY OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT
1230 Acacia Road Dasmariñas Village, Makati City

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INTERESTED APPLICANT PLEASE CONTACT OR VISIT:

BRITANNIA BULK SERVICES PHILS. INC.
Room 803 Ermita Center Bldg.
1350 Roxas Blvd., Ermita Manila
TEL. (02) 5366993
FAX: 5230753
EMAIL: bblphils@bblphils.com

RSLJR Realty

CP: 0917-8220988
Tel: (02) 912-8399
Fax: (02) 856-0325

FOR SALE

1. Agri Land in Tagaytay. 47.849ha. Overlooking Taal Lake, PhP500.00/sq.m.
2. Lot in Tagaytay - overlooking, 7ha. PhP4,500.00/sq.m.
3. Resort in Brgy. Tolentino, Tagaytay. 3,000 sq.m., with cabanas and a big, beautiful house, nice landscaping PhP29M
4. Beautiful Villa in Tagaytay. Lot Area 1,000 sq.m. Floor Area 500 sq.m. PhP12.5M
5. Commercial Lot with Improvements in Malugay St., Makati. 1.1 ha. PhP175,000.00/sq.m.
6. 5-storey Commercial Bldg in Bel-Air, Makati. TFA 2,700.00 sq.m., LA 580 sq m. with parking area, PhP200M
7. 3 BR Res Condo in Salcedo 3, Makati. 150 sq.m., 3 Toilet Bathrooms, Maid's Rm with TB, 2 parking slots, PhP16M
8. Commercial Lot in Alabang-Zapote Road. 2,500 sq.m. @ PhP33,000/sq.m.
9. Fully Operating Resort in Maharlika St., Bgy. Balanoy, La Paz, Tarlac. 1.104 ha. With 2 pools, Fitness Gym, Karaoke Bar, 12 Family Rooms with TB, Bar with Billiards, 3 Function Rooms, 30 Open Cottages, Fishpond wide Parking Area. PhP25M
10. Farm Lots in Tanay, Rizal: 1,000 sq.m., 1 ha, 2ha, 4ha, 8ha, 24ha, 50ha. Price Range: PhP60.00-150.00/sq.m.

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SITE MECHANICAL ENGINEER(PL&FF)
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ELECTRICAL SUPERVISORS
MECHANICAL SUPERVISORS
MECHANICAL SUPERVISORS
SKILLED PIPEFITTERS
ELECTRICAL SKILLED TECHNICIANS
ELECTRICAL SKILLED TECHNICIAN SUPERVISOR
PLUMBERS
PLUMBER SUPERVISOR
SKILLED PLUMBERS
SKILLED DUCT INSTALLERS
SKILLED ELECTRICIANS
DUCTMEN
DUCTMEN SUPERVISOR
PIPE FITTERS
PIPE FITTER SUPERVISOR
QA/QC ENGINEER/ELECTRICAL

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BANQUETS SALES EXECUTIVES
MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR
FOOD & BEVERAGES RESERVATION STAFF
GRAPHIC DESIGNER
CARPENTER
PLUMBER
ELECTRICIANS
COLD ROOM/AIR CONDITION MECHANIC
CASHIER (MALE AND FEMALE)
ACCOUNTING CLERK
FRONT OFFICE CLERK
SECURITY GUARD SUPERVISOR
ASSISTANT PLANNING AND RESEARCH MANAGER
PLANNING AND RESEARCH ASSISTANT
FLORIST
DRIVER
SECRETARY(F&B SALEs ADMIN)
GYM FITNESS INSTRUCTOR
RECREATION SUPERVISOR
COMPUTER/ IT TECHNICIAN
CIVIL ENGINEER
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SECRETARY - 1 FEMALE
CALL CENTER AGENTS - 5 (MALE / FEMALE)
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SENIOR SUPERVISOR - 2 FEMALE / 1 MALE
SUPERVISOR - 10FEMALE/15 MALE
CLEANERS -300 FEMALE/ 150 MALE
GENERAL PRACTISIONER - 1 FEMALE
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[illegible]

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www.jobsmnl.com

State of Kuwait
Ministry of Health

Medical Shoes Technicians required for the Artificial Limp Centre Center, Ministry of Health, State of Kuwait with the following requirements:

1. Senior Medical Shoes Technicians (2)

Qualifications:
- Higher Secondary School with Two years diploma course plus 10 (ten) years experience

Job requirements:
- Knowledge of basics of the profession of all medical shoes manufacturing stages
- Knowledge and understanding how to take specific measures of diseases such as Congenital, feet problems, diabetes

2. Medical Shoes Assistant Technicians (2)

Qualifications:
- Higher Secondary School with Two years diploma course

Job requirements:
- Knowledge to take specific measures of diseases such as Gypsum-plastic-leather
- Manufacturing medical shoes with specialization in diseases like Paralysis-Blisters-Minor-knees and feet problems

3. Medical Shoes Technicians (2)

Qualifications:
- Higher Secondary School diploma industrial parts and five years experience

Job requirements:
- Ability to manufacture medical shoes, including feet problems, paralysis machines, Types of back-belts and lower manufacturing parts

4. Parts Manufacturing Technicians (6)

Qualifications:
- Diploma in industrial parts, medical equipment, with five years experience. In addition, should be able to comprehend English language for items mentioned above, the benefit of working in the field along with workstations who uses these Elements in real life situations.

Job requirements:
- Manufacturing Aljabar parts, manufacturing higher element parts and paralysis Substitute equipment.

Salary and Privileges:
The salary will be according to qualification and years of experience as per our Civil Services Commission regulations of the State of Kuwait. Thirty-five days annual leave.

Economy class air tickets to country of residence on joining duty and on termination of contract.

Applications including detailed C.V., copies of qualification and experience certificates, passport copy and names of three references to be sent to the following address:

EMBASSY OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT
1230 Acacia Road Dasmariñas Village, Makati City

CIVIL ENGINEER

Min. 3 years experience - Construction/ Building Industry
Excellent Leadership Skills
Email resumé w/ pic to tatrm7@yahoo.com or call 09209523620

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Above-ave. communication/ presentation skills
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Applicants must be:
- MALE; College Graduates
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Qualified applicants should mail comprehensive resumé, 2x2 ID picture, copy of diploma, transcript of records, employment history references, etc. to:

P.O. Box 1320 Quezon City
Central Post Office
1153 Quezon City

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

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MALE OR FEMALE, AT LEAST 23 YEARS OLD
NEW GRADUATES ARE WELCOME BUT EXPERIENCE IN CAD 06/08 ON CONSTRUCTION FIELD WILL BE A PLUS FACTOR
WILLING TO WORK OUTSIDE METRO MANILA

Interested Applicants Please Apply Personally or Send Resumé/Biodata with 2x2 colored picture to:
R.G. SIMBULAN AND PARTNERS CORP.
Suite 326 LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St.,
Brgy. Bel-Air II, Makati City

Look for Rolly De Leon
Tel. No. 890-0102 / 899-7308

Subic Amino Hightech Corporation
is in need of:

MANAGER FOR LOGISTICS

Criteria:
- Graduate of any 4-year course
- At least 2 years experience in Import/Export
- Can speak fluent Nihonggo

Interested applicants can submit their applications to:

Subic Amino Hightech Corporation
2B Boton Lights and Science Park Bldg.
Subic Bay Freeport Zone
Telefax: (047) 252-7337

IMMEDIATE HIRING
REAL ESTATE CONSULTANT

Qualifications:
Male 20-26 yrs. old • Degree holder (any 4-yr. course) • at least 5'6 in height • w/ good interpersonal skills; w/ or w/out experience • w/ pleasant personality, flexible, aggressive, ambitious, dynamic
Wages: 12.5K basic salary plus incentives, commissions and travel abroad.
Qualified applicants may call / txt @ this # (0920) 523-61-24

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Standard	Php	2,900	net good for two persons
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De Luxe 2	Php	3,500	net good for two persons
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Family room	Php	5,000	net good for three persons
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Rates are inclusive of breakfast for two (2)
Additional person sharing room Php 600 per head per

SJA's Baliktanaw Reunion

AFTER 21 YEARS, DON'T you want to reminisce all the fun and nerve-wrecking memories? Come and see your batchmates once again! St. James Academy, Malabon Batch '86 is inviting all alumni for the "Balik Tanaw Reunion" on Dec. 29, 5 p.m. at Oasis, 3rd floor Gallery, Aurora Blvd., Quezon City (near Broadway Centrum). An enjoyable night of 80's music, gift giving, exciting games, and major raffle and surprises await you! For confirmation, call Arnold at 447-2525 or mobile (0918-9379587).

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A loving mother,
a sister and a friend
who always shared
with us the
Love of Christ.
We pray for her today, on the
5th Anniversary of her passing.

Carolina Sarmiento Roño

September 28, 1933 - December 15, 2002

Mass will be offered at her place of rest in ***Himlayang Pilipino*** *cemetery on Saturday,* ***December 15th at 4:00 p.m.***

Holy masses will also be offered at the following churches today, 12/15/07

***St. Claire Monastery** - 6:00 a.m.*
Bgy. Rawls, Calbayog City, Samar
***Mary Consolatrix** - 6:30 a.m.*
Bgy. San Policarpio, Calbayog City, Samar
***St. Peter & Paul Cathedral** -5:30 a.m. & 5:00 p.m.*
Calbayog City, Samar
***Most Holy Trinity Parish** - 6:00 a.m.*
Bgy. Trinidad, Calbayog City, Samar

PIONEER

The Board of Directors,
Management and Staff
of the Pioneer Group

Condole with the family of

ROMAN T. CHUA

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT
PIONEER INSURANCE & SURETY CORPORATION

who returned to his maker on December 12, 2007 at the age of 52.

His cremated remains will be at the Bonifacio Chapel of Funeraria Paz, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque from the evening of December 14 until December 16.

Interment will be on Sunday, December 16 following the necrological service.

"There is a time and a season for everything
A time to be born and a time to die.
A time to weep and a time to mourn. A time to laugh and a time to dance.
God has made everything beautiful in its time."
- Ecclesiastes 3:1, 2, 4 & 11

6th Death Anniversary

MENELIO B. SAMSON

July 22, 1935 – December 15, 2001
Camalig, Albay

So dearly missed,
So lovingly remembered
Lydia, Meldy & Jack, Biggs, Alodia & Lynelle

RESTITUTO "Resty" R. SALDAÑA

Retiree of Distribution,
United Laboratories, Inc.

Peacefully joined his Creator on December 12, 2007 at the age of 69.

His body lies in state at Funeraria Paz, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque. Interment will follow after the 9:00 a.m. mass on December 20 at Manila Memorial Park.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)
WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
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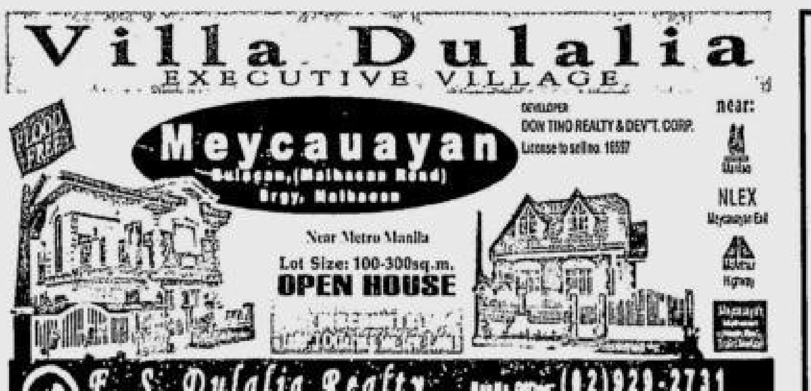

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"Papa, you will forever be in our hearts"

Madison Ang Sr.

(Ang Un Giok)

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord.

He joined our Creator on the 13th day of December, 2007 at the age of 95.

His loving wife **Salvacion** (†); children **Betty, Raul & Lorinda, Rose & Rey, Madison Noel & Genelyn**; grandchildren, great-grandchildren and all his relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sanctuarium, Rose Garden Chapel, No. 739 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be tomorrow, December 16, 2007 - 3:00 p.m. at Heritage Park, Taguig, Metro Manila.

BENJAMIN V. GUILLES

of Calapan, Or. Mindoro & Pilar Village, Las Piñas City
Died in the peace of the Lord on December 9, 2007 at the age of 63.

His loving wife, **Linda**; and mother, **Virginia**; children **Bj** and **Stephanie, Lynnbei** and **Arjun, Aaron, Mark & Rochelle**, and **Chantelle**; grandchildren **Stephan, Jasmin, Ayi, Yza & Enzo**; brothers, sisters & in-laws, **Eliza & Gerry, Maynard & Myrna, Delia & Rolly, Myrna & Boy, Belen, Vilma, Edna & Willie, Don & Mimie**; & relatives, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque.

Interment will be on Sunday, December 16, 2007 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Loyola Memorial Park.

CLASSIFIEDS

Home Guaranty Corporation
Office of the President

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC) is inviting interested parties to submit separate proposals for the disposition of the two projects described under a joint venture arrangement:

	MARGARITA EAST VILLE			MARGARITA PLAZA		
	C. Lawis St., Brgy. San Isidro, Antipolo City			Scouts Limbaga, Rallos & Ybardolaza, Brgy. Sacred Heart, Quezon City		
	Area (sq.m.)	Value of the Property	HGC's Guaranteed Share	Area (sq.m.)	Value of the Property	HGC's Guaranteed Share
House & Lot	3,959	44,396,000.00	P44M or 40% of the net proceeds plus the value of land, whichever is higher	-	0.00	P100M or 40% of the net proceeds plus the value of land, whichever is higher
Lot only	3,564	11,058,000.00		2,366	50,882,000.00	
TOTAL	7,523	55,454,000.00		2,366	50,882,000.00	

Payment of HGC's guaranteed share must not exceed a maximum of three (3) years.

Bidders are advised to inspect the subject properties to determine their actual conditions. For each project, bidding documents can be obtained from the HGC's Asset Management Department (AMD) at Jade Building (4th Floor), 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P 25,000.00)** from **December 17 to 28, 2007**. For further inquiries please call the AMD at tel. nos. 897-3286 & 897-3290 or visit the HGC office at Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

THE CORPORATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL OFFERS AND TO WAIVE ANY DEFECTS OR TO ACCEPT SUCH OFFERS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE CORPORATION.

(Sgd.) ATTY. DANILO C. JAVIER
Chairman
Asset Disposition Committee

(PDI – December 8 & 15, 2007)

MOFYA 2007

Model OFW Family of the Year Awards

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Intramuros, Manila

MESSAGES

Congratulations to this year's winners of the **Model OFW Family of the Year Award (MOFYA).**

The MOFYA, in its 3rd year, is growing stronger with the continuous and increasing support from OWWA's various sectors and partners. MOFYA is now an event to look forward to by OFWs and their families every year. But unlike its first two staging, the focus for this year's MOFYA search is on successful family relations – a different approach from the previous years which looked into the entrepreneurial development of an OFW family. Therefore, in addition to having a financially stable equality of life, a MOFYA awardee must also be a role model of society in terms of good family morals and educational values.

It is very fitting that in paying tribute to OFWs, who are today's new heroes of the nation, and their families, it comes at a time where our country's economy is getting stronger buoyed by sound economic policies of the government and of course, by the remittances of the thousands of countrymen working in various parts of the world.

What separates this year's awardees from the regular OFW family is in these trying times where financial gains of OFW families are negated by failure in the home, the MOFYA winners are able to maintain close family ties which we Filipinos value so much. In their willingness to go beyond what is required of them, our awardees are not only outstanding workers but also men and women of courage, willing to help others in their difficulties.

Even without MOFYA, all of these year's awardees are already winners in their own right. Their success stories are good examples, not only for OFW Families, but also for the whole Filipino Nation to follow. The hardships and challenges that they faced and how they overcame them are truly inspiring for all of us.

With that, I wish each of you good luck and congratulations for being **MODEL OFW FAMILIES!**

ARTURO D. BRION
Secretary
Department of Labor and Employment

FAMILIES OF TWO SEAFARERS, HOUSEHOLD SERVICE WORKER are 2007 MODEL OFW FAMILY OF THE YEAR NATIONAL AWARDEES

The **Model Overseas Filipino Worker's (OFW) Family of the Year Award (MOFYA)** is an annual event of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA). Its objective is to give recognition to OFWs and their families who have demonstrated financial stability, steady and enduring family ties, and outstanding community service.

It was first conceptualized in 2003, the Year of the OFW Family. It started out as a component activity of OWWA's Family Welfare Program for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and their families but eventually evolved into a more prestigious event due to its significance and impact.

The first MOFYA was held last 11 November 2005. Seventeen (17) regional awardees were chosen all over the country with NCR Regional Winner **OFW Rogelio Eleazar San Andres,** RWO VI Awardee **OFW Jesus Vagilidad Cepeda** and RWO IX Awardee **Anicia Abrera Alvarez** emerging as MOFYA National Awardees for 2005.

In the second staging of MOFYA, aside from the usual seventeen (17) regional awardees, the national winners were increased to three (3), representing the major island groups of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The national winners for MOFYA 2006 are **OFW Myrna Sevilla-Punay of Region IV-A for Luzon, OFW Melchor Jarena Caayon of Region VI for Visayas, and OFW Kagim Halim Jajurie of Region IX for Mindanao.**

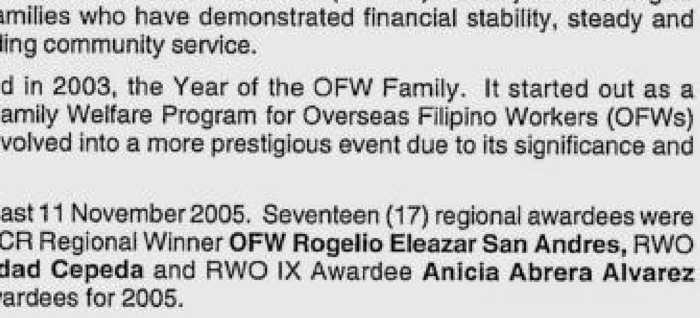
In awarding ceremonies held last 06 December 2007, the families of two seafarers and a household service worker were chosen as Model OFW Family of the Year National Awardees for Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The MOFYA National Awardees for Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao are the families of OFWs Oscar A. de Jesus, Eugenio B. Atuel, Jr. and Virgencita A. Lagunsay respectively.

MOFYA National Awardee for Luzon OFW OSCAR ABELEDA DE JESUS has been an overseas worker for 26 years, five (5) years as a land-based worker in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and over 21 years as a seafarer. OFW DE JESUS is married to Novelyn M. De Jesus. They are blessed with three (3) children, the eldest of which graduated from the University of the Philippines with a degree in BS. Civil Engineering, the second is now taking-up medicine proper and the youngest recently passed the medical board exam for physicians.

A staunch advocate of reforestation and clean-and-green project, the De Jesus Family initiated the planting of more than 100,000 mangrove trees along the seashore of Looc. They also supported the cooperative movement and encouraged people to join the cooperative as a way of empowering them. **MOFYA National Awardee for Visayas OFW EUGENIO B. ATUEL,** a seafarer, was commonly known by his family and friends to be a family-centered man, industrious, service-oriented and firm in his principles. He is married to Corazon Gaviola and is blessed with seven (7) children.

It has been a tradition for the ATUEL family to set aside 10% of their annual income for various outreach projects. Aside from this, they also assist less privileged yet deserving students. They are also very visible in civic, academic, political, cultural and religious organizations.

LUZON WINNER



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VISAYAS WINNER

MOFYA National Awardee for Visayas OFW EUGENIO B. ATUEL, a seafarer, was commonly known by his family and friends to be a family-centered man, industrious, service-oriented and firm in his principles. He is married to Corazon Gaviola and is blessed with seven (7) children.

It has been a tradition for the ATUEL family to set aside 10% of their annual income for various outreach projects. Aside from this, they also assist less privileged yet deserving students.

They are also very visible in civic, academic, political, cultural and religious organizations.

MINDANAO WINNER

MOFYA National Awardee for Mindanao OFW VIRGENCITA "Maizarah" A. LAGUNSAY was married to the late Amado Sagansam Lagunsay, a Muslem from Brgy. Aplaya, Digos, Davao del Sur, who was also an OFW. They are blessed with four (4) children who are all degree holders.

As far as public service is concerned, OFW Lagunsay is currently involved in several projects such as being the president of the Indigent Women Association of Brgy. Aplaya, wherein they were able to avail of the OWWA Groceria Project and the Food Preservation Livelihood Project. She is also the secretary of the Federation of Purok Presidents Association, and a member of Lupong Tagapamayapa of Brgy. Aplaya, Digos City. For OFW Lagunsay, community service is neither for show nor recognition, but simply a personal crusade for her and her family.

None other than Vice-President and Presidential Adviser on OFW Concerns Noli "Kabayan" De Castro and OWWA Administrator Marianito D. Roque led the awarding of this year's MOFYA National Winners.

In his speech as guest of honor, Vice-President de Castro congratulated this year's winners for their hard work and competence. He also praised their strong family ties, respect, trust and good governance of the family as the basic institution of society and how they were able to respond to the challenges in spite of the distance between them. But he also mentioned that it is a sad reality that they have to leave the country and be away from their loved ones because of limited opportunities in terms of employment.

However, he is also optimistic that there will come a time that the trend of Filipinos leaving for work overseas will be reversed with the inflow of investments resulting in jobs like in the case of Hanjin Company in Subic Bay Development Authority which needs twenty-thousand (20,000) workers for its ship building facilities. He is currently negotiating for the said company to hire workers and informal settlers displaced by the North Rail Project aside from the residents of Central Luzon.

Administrator Roque, meanwhile, talked of the importance of the OFW Family as they suffer more from the separation brought about by overseas employment and thus, the need for an equal and parallel recognition for them as those given to OFWs. MOFYA is OWWA's way of instituting and emphasizing on the importance of a complete family as an aspect of success in an OFW's life.

The MOFYA National Awardees each received prizes from OWWA's corporate partners: Toyota Avanza, Nokia 5070 and trophies from GLOBE TELECOM, cash prizes and plaques from WESTERN UNION, AIG "Money Tree" Investment Package from PHILAMLIFE, free airline tickets to any destination in the Philippines from Cebu Pacific and gift checks from BANCO DE ORO.

HOW TO BE A MODEL OFW OF THE YEAR? TIPS FROM 2007 MOFYA NATIONAL WINNERS

What are the secrets of these year's 2007 Model OFW Family of the Year Awards (MOFYA) Winners? Though each of them did not expect that their families would be chosen as the MOFYA Awardees for Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, nevertheless they shared their secrets as they made their acceptance speech.

MOFYA Awardee for Luzon OSCAR A. DE JESUS always issued this challenge to his children, "Labanan ninyo ako ng parehas. Gagampanan ko ang pagiging mabuting ama, gampanan ninyo ang pagiging mabuting anak," a challenge which all of his sons responded positively. Furthermore, his motto "Ang Kahirapan ay hindi sagabal sa pag-unlad," which his family lived to the fullest as they overcame their difficulties in achieving their current stature.

As for MOFYA Awardee for Visayas OFW EUGENIO B. ATUEL, his wife Corazon attributes their success to the unwritten rules that govern their family. Rule No. 1 is "Always make your home a paradise." Whatever problems they may face, they must not let it affect their home. Rule No. 2 is "Everyone in the family are forever best friends." No amount of conflict can bridge a gap among family members, they are always open to each other on what they feel, and everyone is ready to lend a hand to anyone of them in need. And lastly, Rule No. 3 is "Always account for God's blessings and share at least 10% to the less fortunate." Their family's own version of love thy neighbor is manifested by their selfless contribution through various outreach projects and their visibility in socio-civic, religious and political activities.

Meanwhile, MOFYA Awardee for Mindanao OFW VIRGENCITA "Maizarah" A. LAGUNSAY concedes that there is no easy recipe for their family's success which she credits to the almighty ALLAH. On their part, it is the values of "Sipag at Tiyaga," which helped their family survived their period of separation and inspired them to invest their savings wisely. These same values are what they are preaching as they assist the less fortunate people of their community where OFW Lagunsay is very active.

So how does a family become a Model OFW Family of the year? Their answers tell it all.

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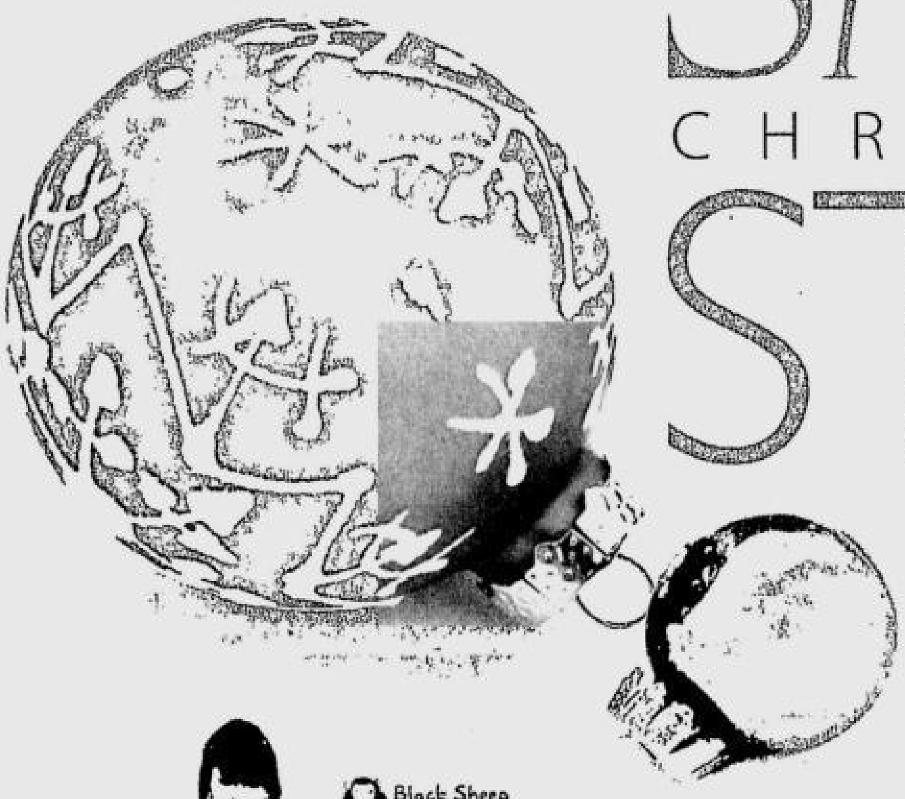
3RD FLOOR, MEGA B



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JEANS COMPANY

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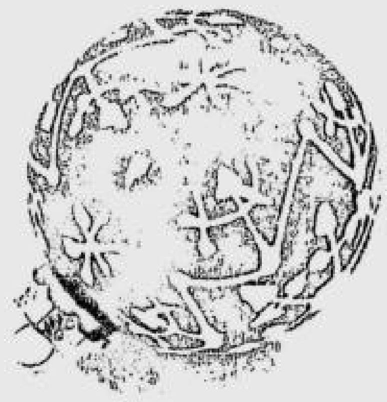
Black Sheep
by MALDITA

2ND FLOOR, ME



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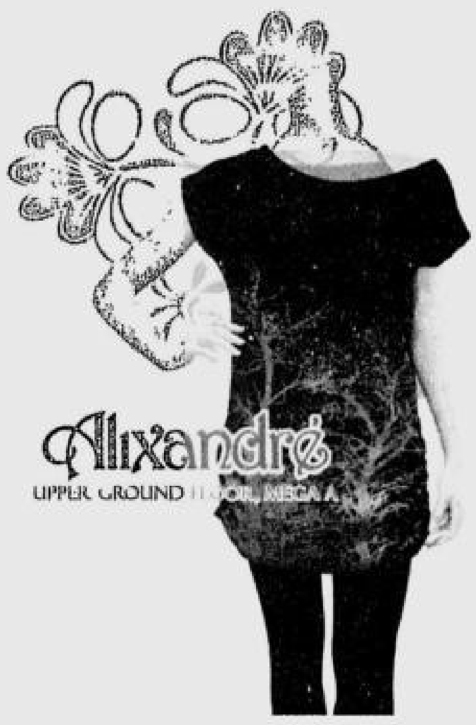
happy holidays

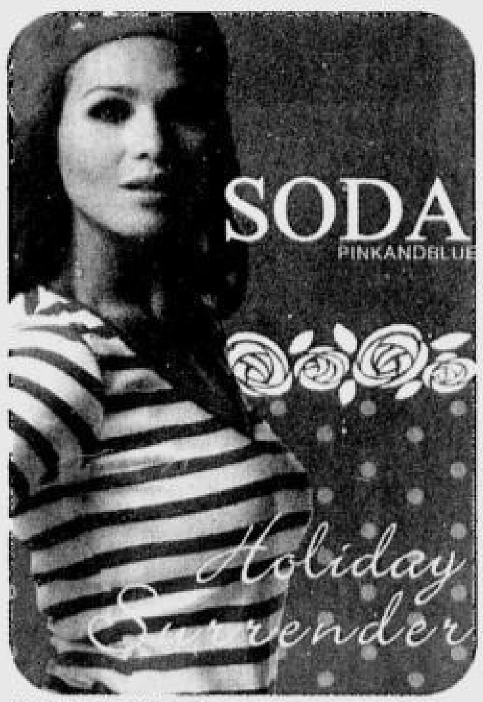
2ND FLOOR, MEGA A & UPPER GROUND, MEGA B

UPPER GROUND FLOOR, MEGA A



UPPER GROUND FLOOR, MEGA A

UPPER GROUND FLOOR, MEGA A


SODA
PINKANDBLUE
Holiday Surrender

3RD FLOOR, MEGA B

3RD FLOOR, MEGA B

UPPER GROUND FLOOR MEGA B &
2ND FLOOR, MEGA A

Lulu Castagnette
lulu fo ever

3RD FLOOR, MEGA A

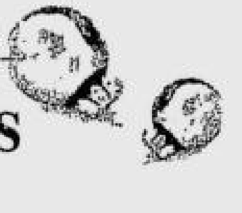
2ND FLOOR, MEGA B

folded&hung

2ND FLOOR, MEGA A

THE black SHOP

2ND FLOOR, MEGA A



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G2000
UPPER GROUND FLOOR, MEGA B

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2ND FLOOR, MEGA B

2ND FLOOR, BLDG. A

MARITHE FRANÇOIS GIRBAUD

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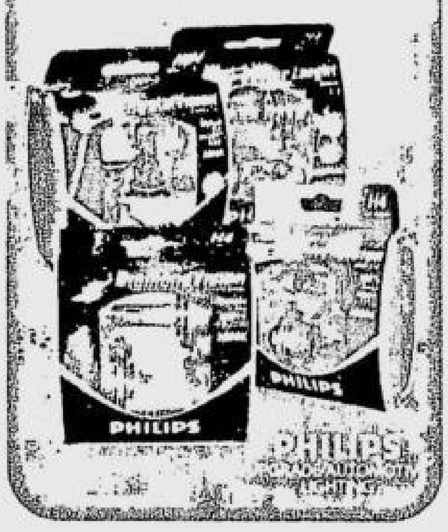
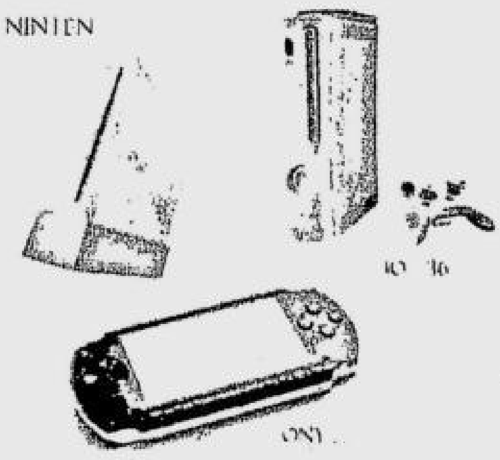
2nd Level, SM MEGAMALL BLDG. B

AUTOSPORT



AUDIO-VISUAL PLEASURES YULE LOVE



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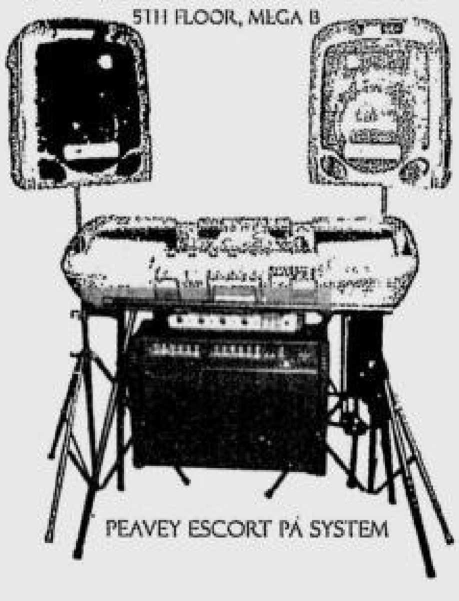

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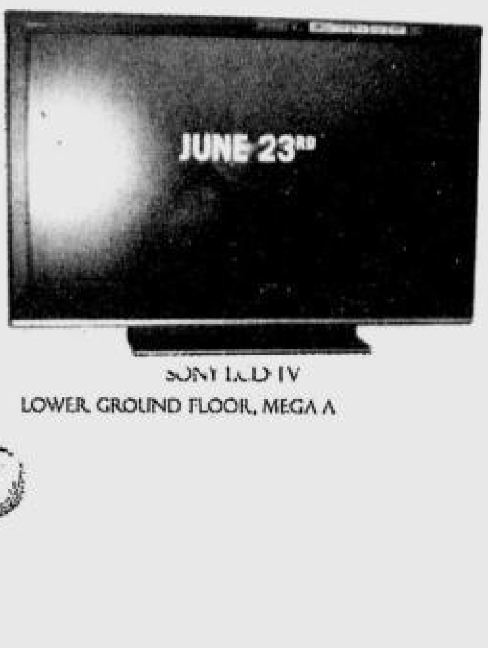

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LOWER GROUND FLOOR, MEGA A

LYRIC
4TH FLOOR, MEGA B

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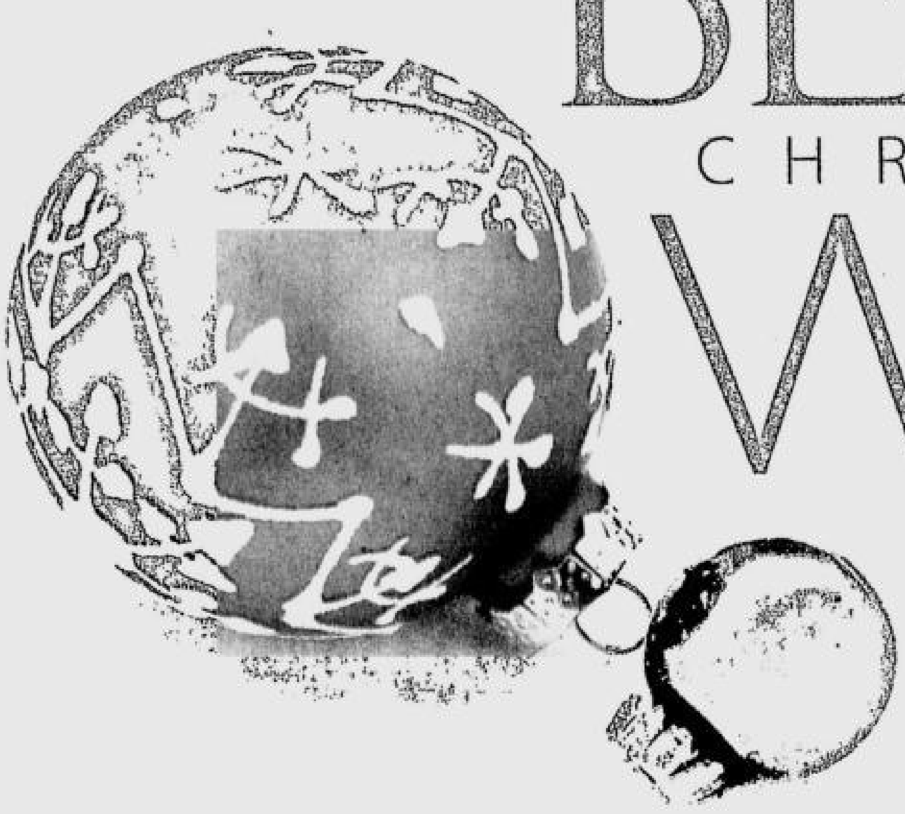

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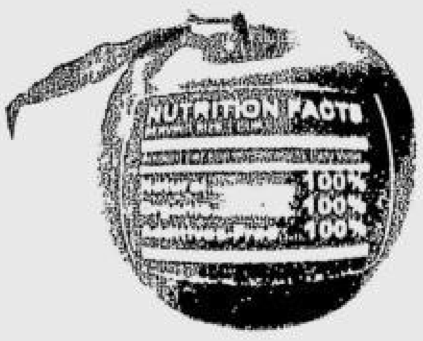
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Ricky Reyes
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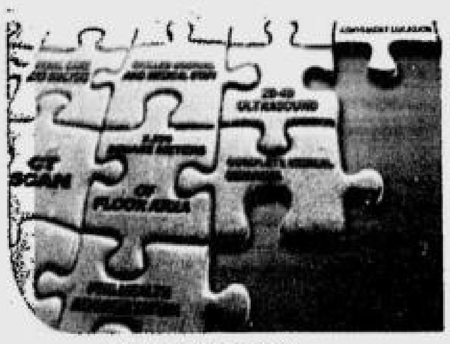
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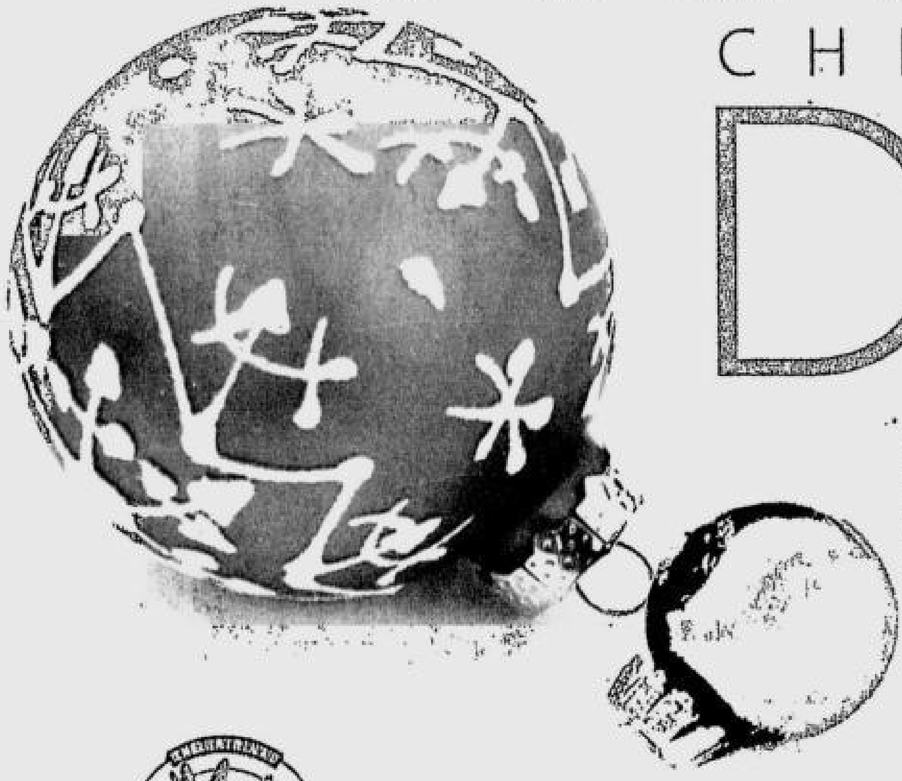

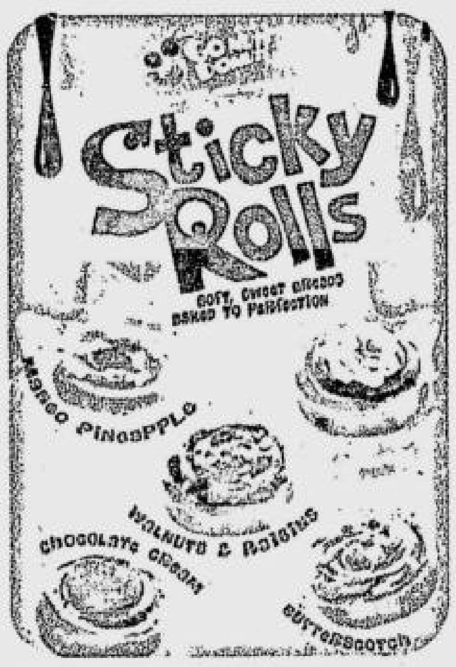
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Butterscotch

UPPER GROUND FLOOR, MEGA A

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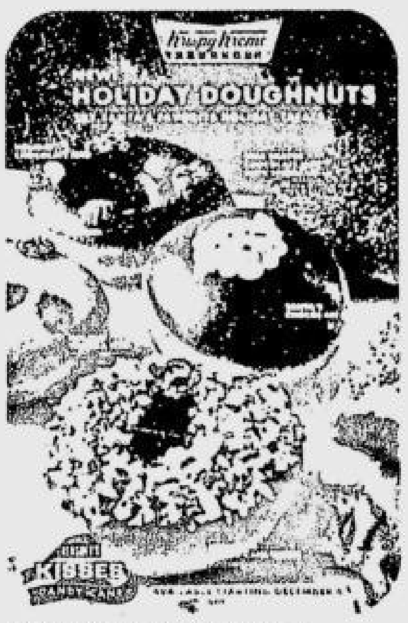
PURE DANISH BUTTER COOKIES

2ND FLOOR, MEGA B &
UPPER GROUND FLOOR, MEGA B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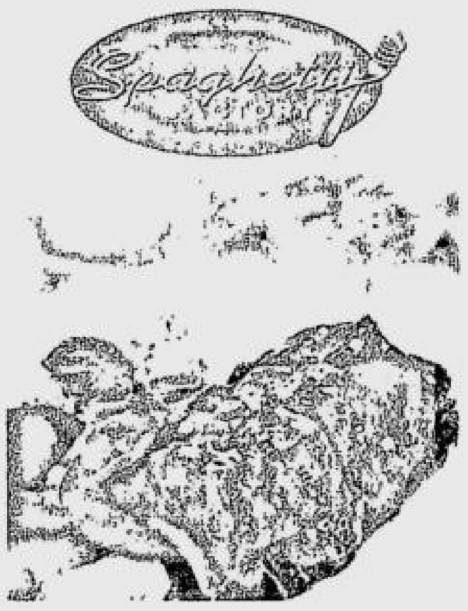
Goldilocks
Rainbow Cake

UPPER GROUND FLOOR, MEGA B &
3RD FLOOR, MEGA B



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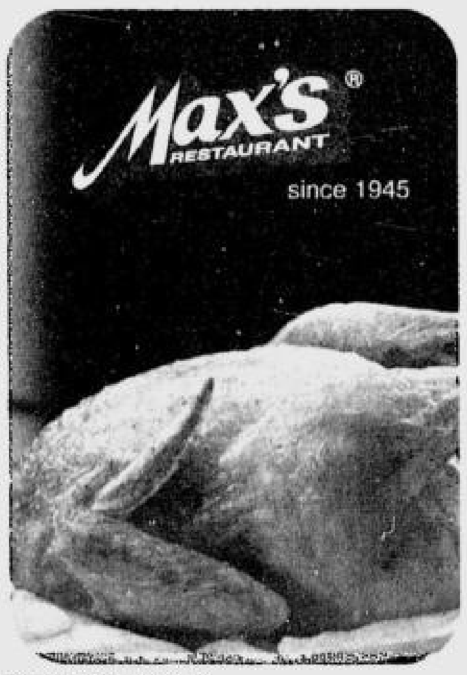
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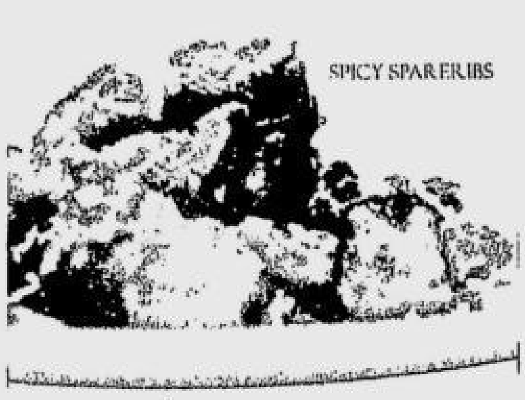

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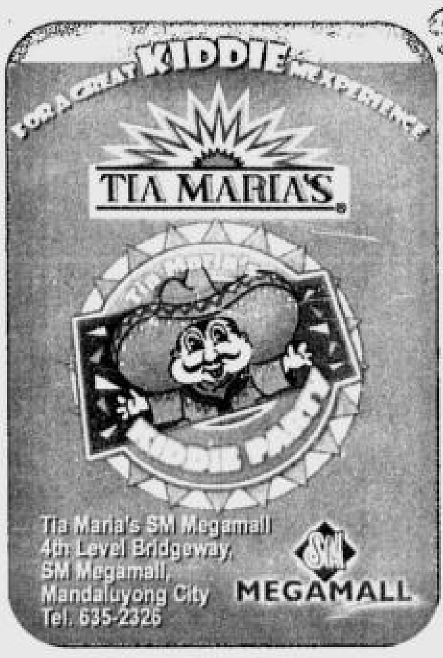
GROUND FLOOR, MEG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December 17
Rev. Fr. Genaro O. Diwa

December 18
Rev. Fr. Dave T. Concepcion

December 19
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December 20
Most Rev. Jesse E. Mercado, D. D.

December 21
Most Rev. Luis Antonio G. Tagle, D. D.

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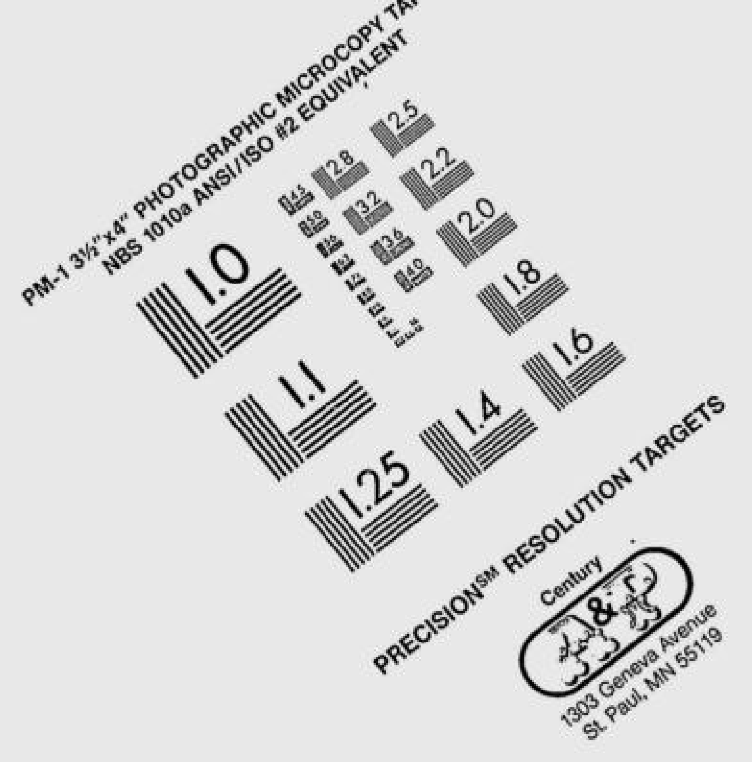
Rev. Fr. Fernando M. Suarez

SM SUPERMALLS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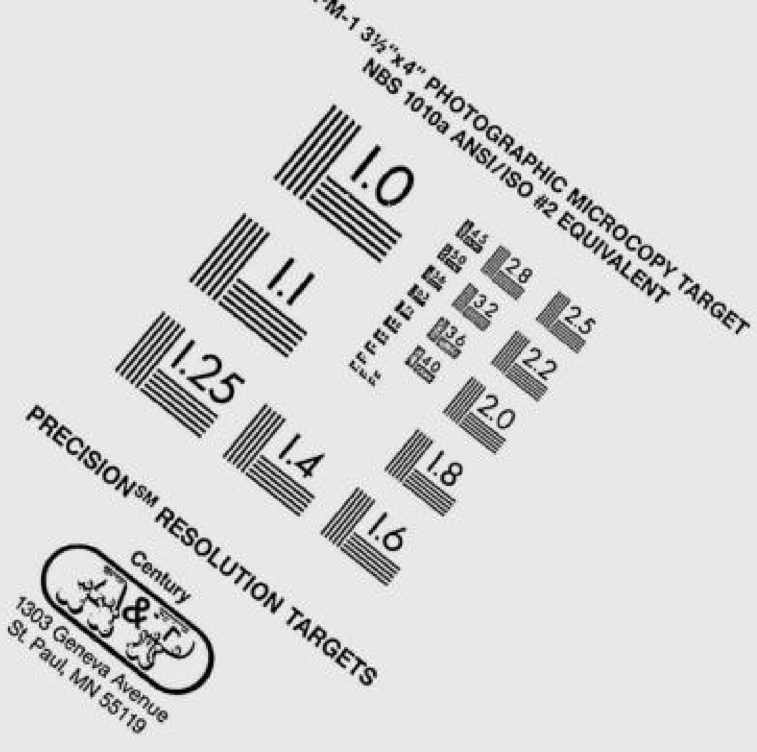
PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS
Century
1303 Geneva Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55119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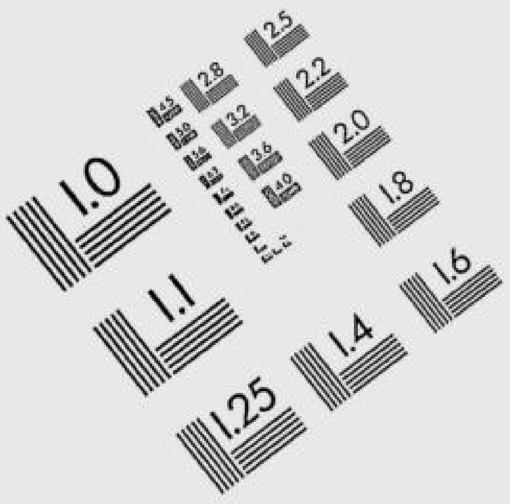
PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS
Century
1303 Geneva Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55119

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)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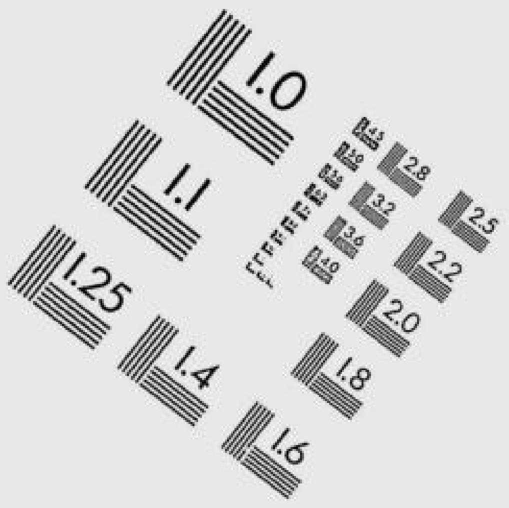
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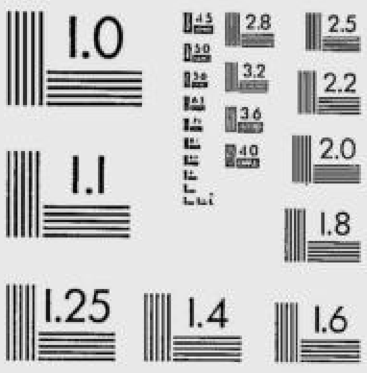
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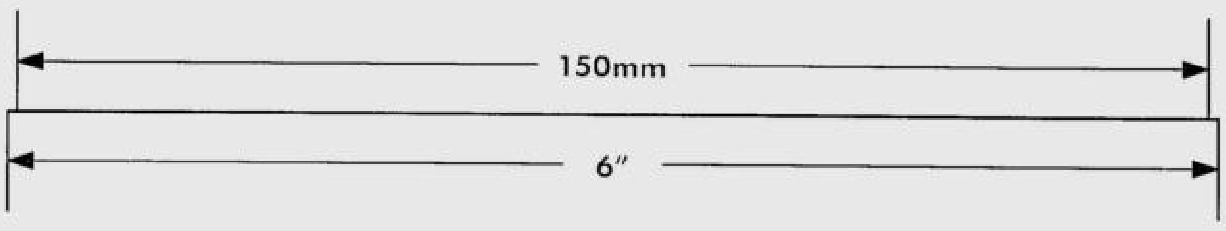

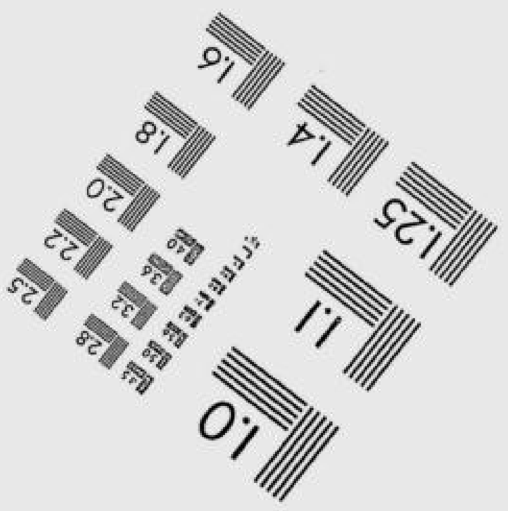
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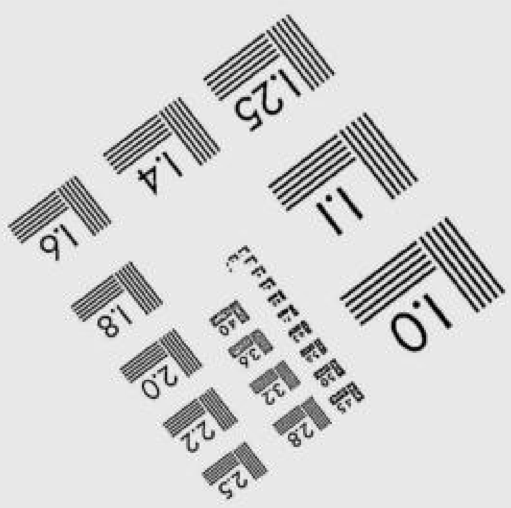
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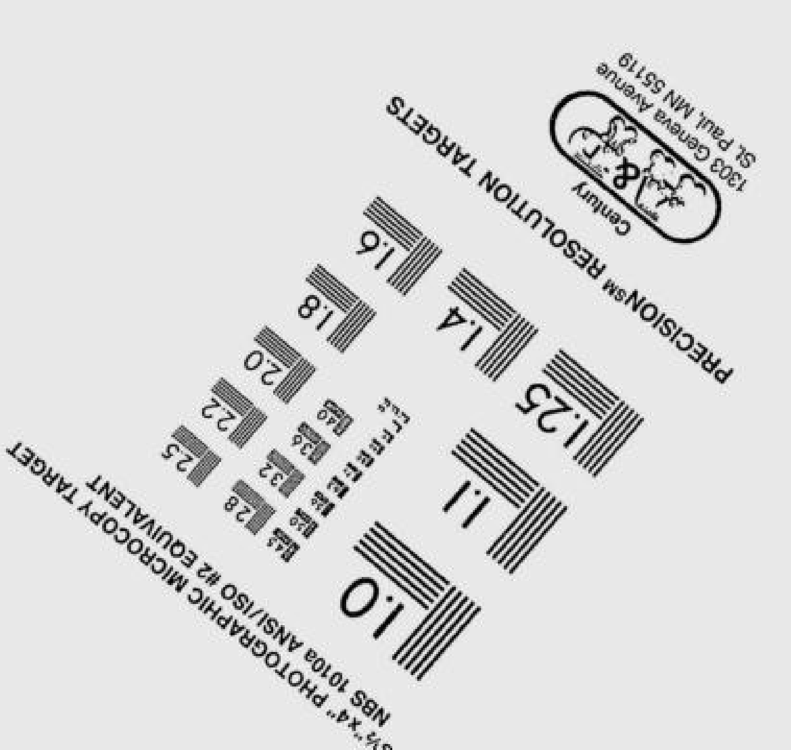
PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS
Century
1303 Geneva Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55119
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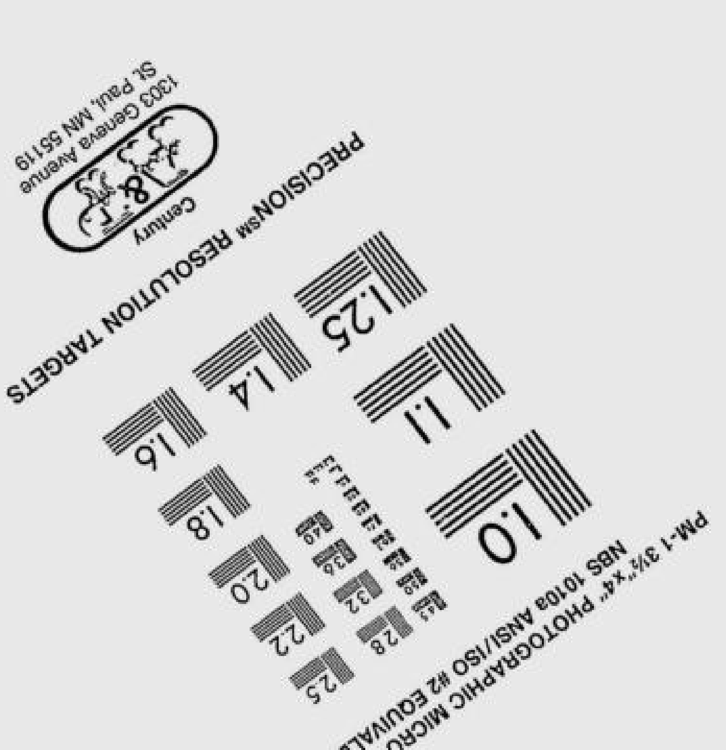
PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS
Century
1303 Geneva Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55119
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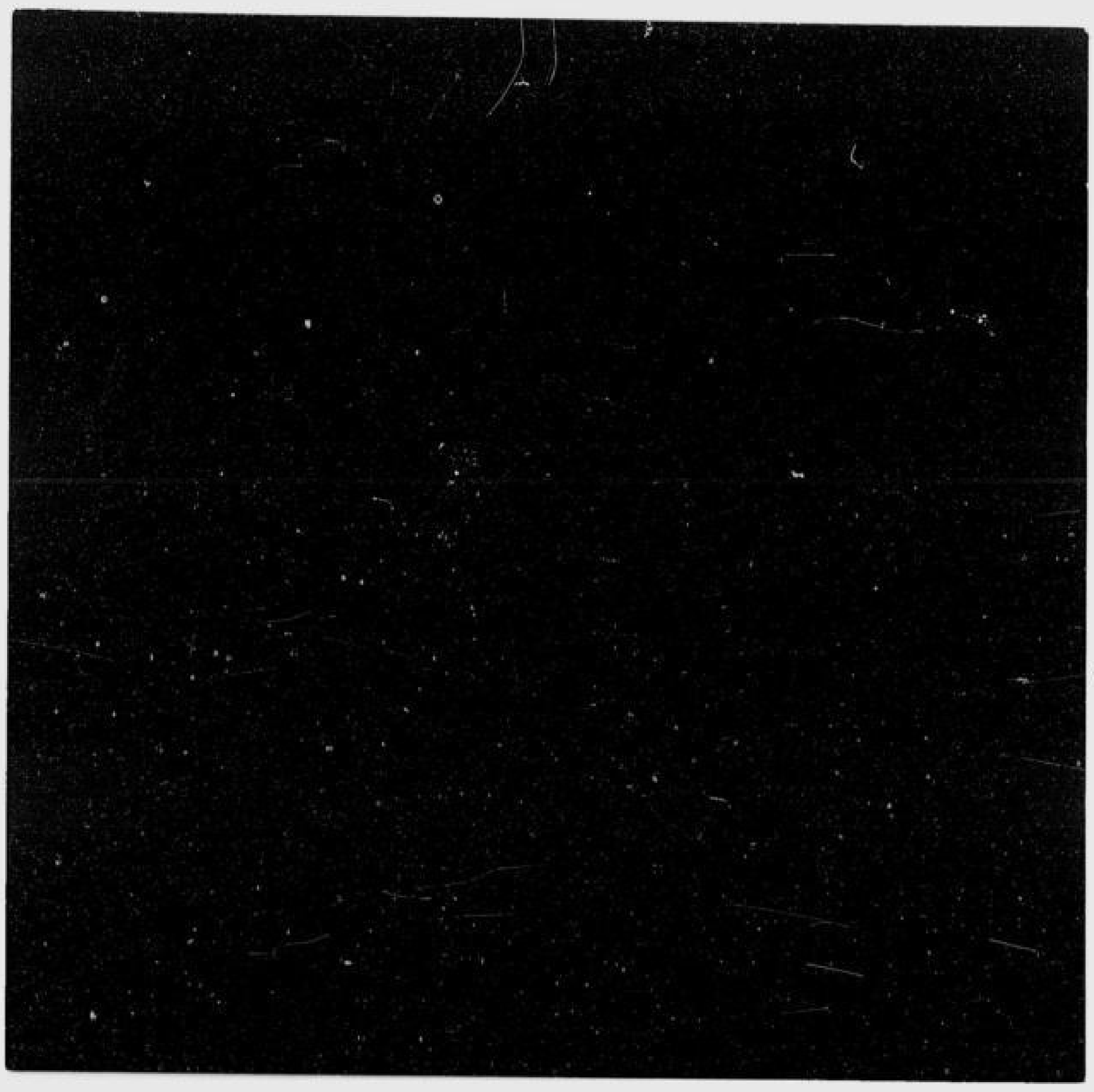

PHILIPPINE
DAILY INQUIRER
MANILA, PHILIPPINES

DECEMBER
1 THRU 15
2007

REEL 418

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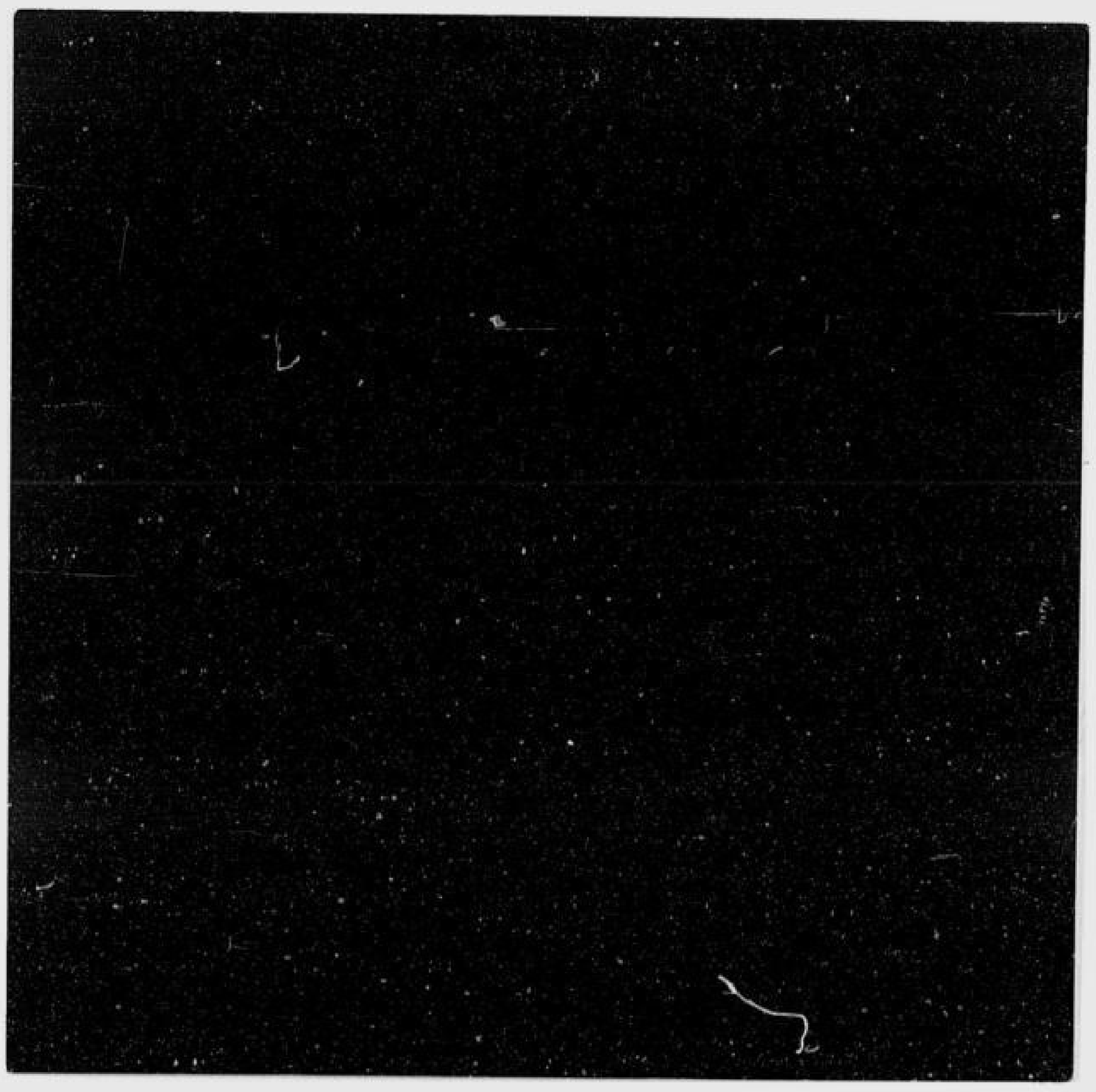
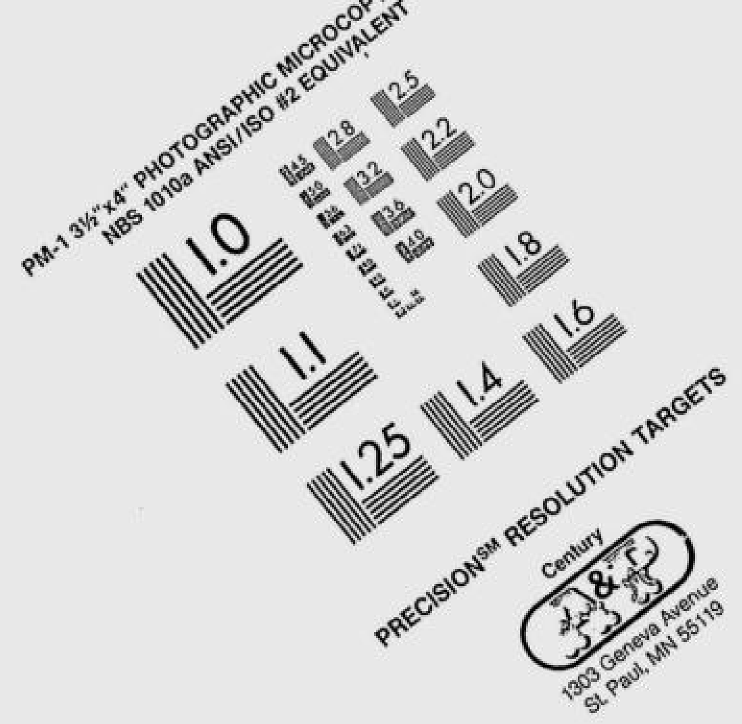
REEL 419

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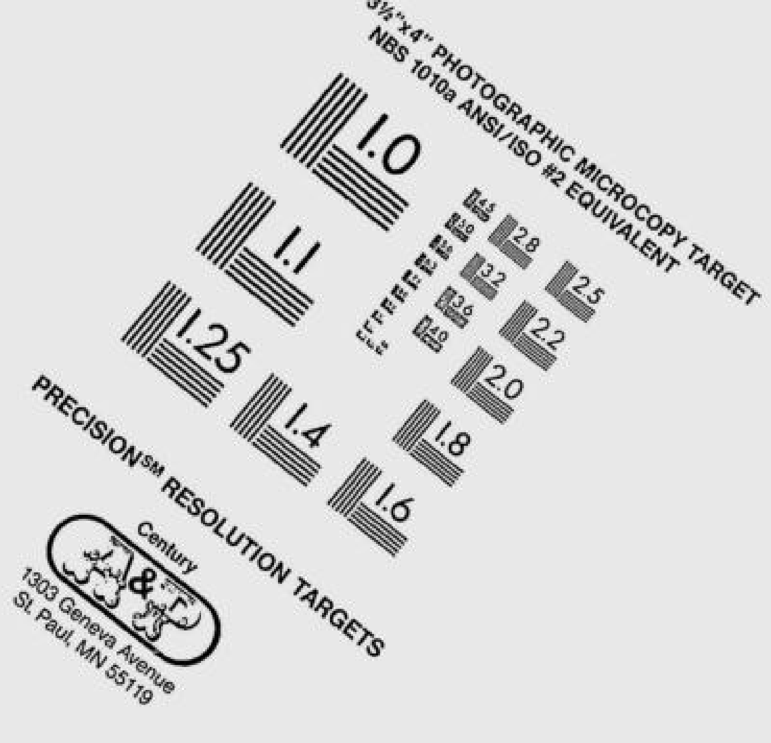
Century
A&P
1303 Geneva Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55119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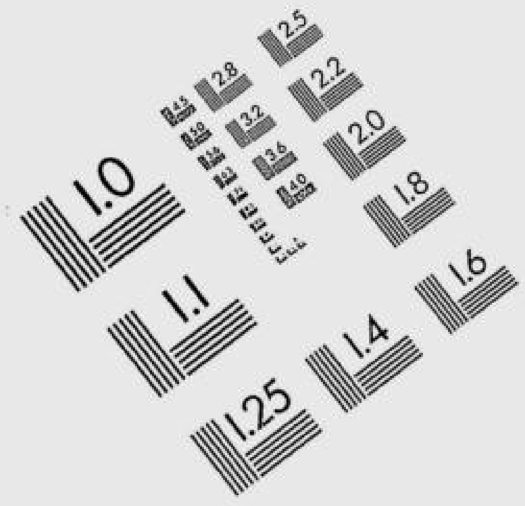
PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS
Century
A&P
1303 Geneva Avenue
St Paul, MN 55119

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)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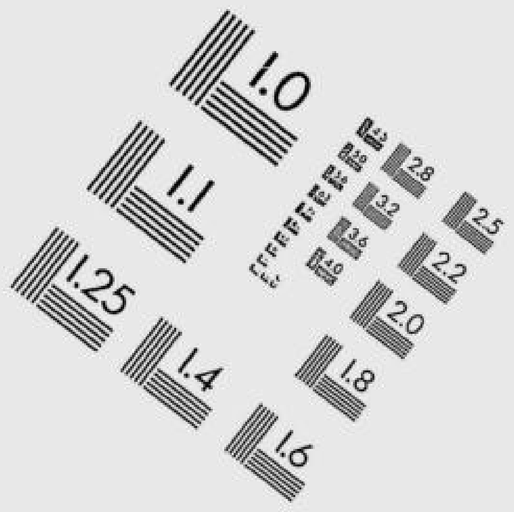
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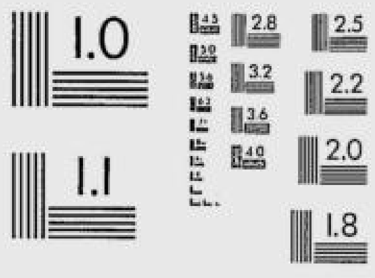
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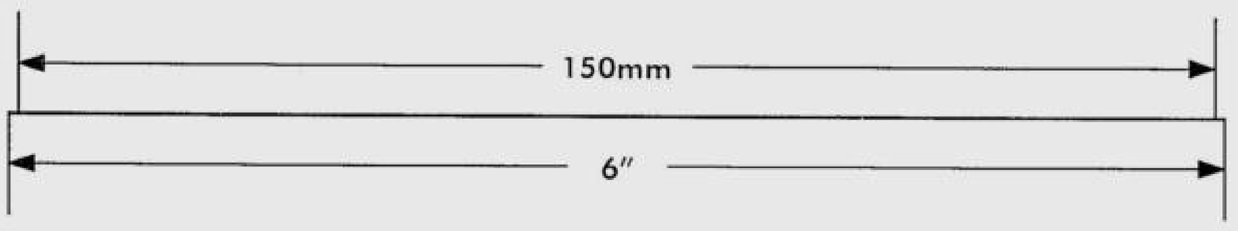

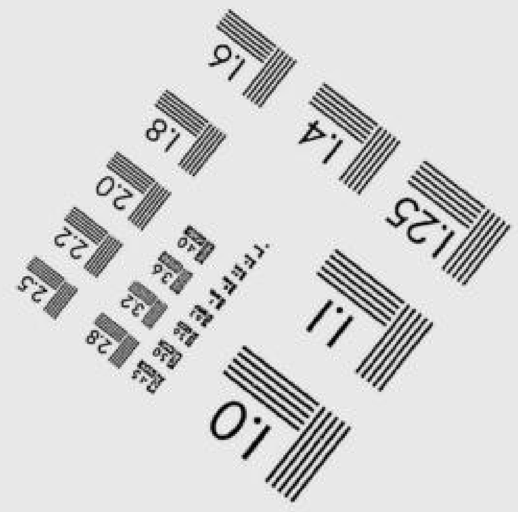
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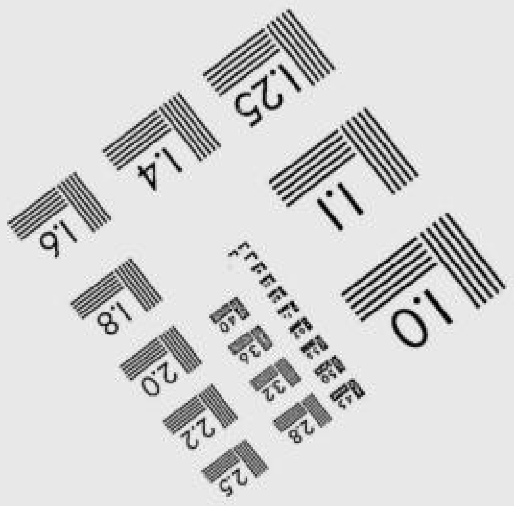
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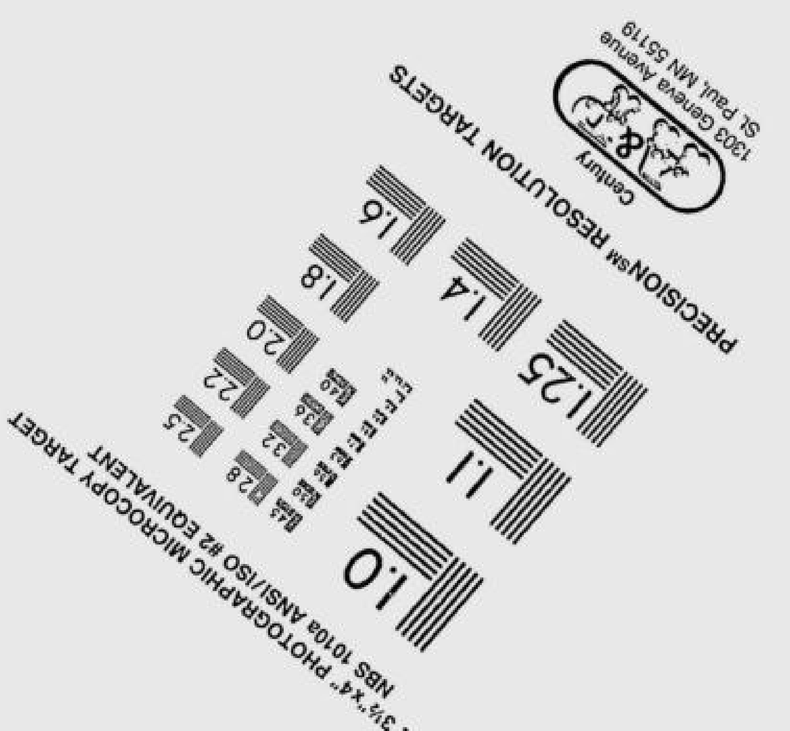
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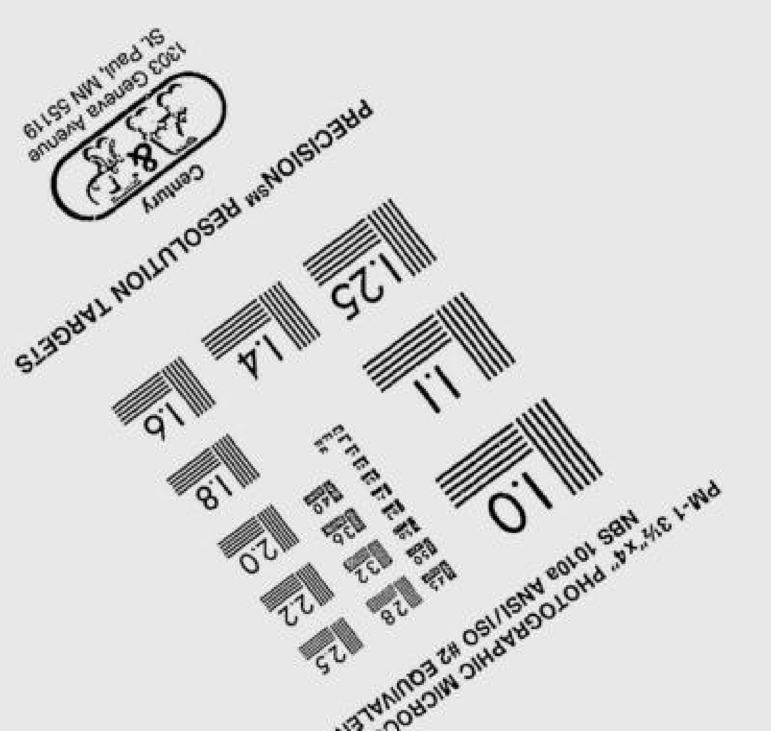
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